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# CHRISTOCRACY;

OR,

## ESSAYS

ON THE

### Coming and Kingdom of Christ.

WITH ANSWERS TO THE

PRINCIPAL OBJECTIONS OF POSTMILLENARIANS.

BY

✓  
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AND

✓  
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## TO THE READER.



OUR first design, kind reader, in the preparation of the following essays, was to elicit a thorough discussion of Millenarianism by brethren of opposite views.

Such a discussion, it appeared to us, would be timely, and if conducted in a becoming manner, useful ; inasmuch as it would necessarily relate to the specific object of our common Christian hope, involving certain points now accepted as points of unquestionable orthodoxy, fairly so settled by the prevailing method of biblical interpretation.

You are doubtless aware that this hope, as to its immediate object and reference, and these points, as to their scriptural soundness, have been made matters of dispute among the avowed friends of the Redeemer. Many volumes have been written on both sides of the subject, contemptuously called by some Chiliasm ; but no argument, pro and con, by mutual consent of parties, has been so presented as to submit it to the trial of an exhaustive examination. Could we have such a twofold series of interscribed essays, if well prepared, they would go far toward securing a better understanding of it, by settling a previous question, which must be settled before a satisfactory adjustment of the controversy can be reached ; namely, How must the Scriptures be interpreted ? Must we explain the Bible literally, having due regard to figure and symbol, or may we expound it by a double sense put upon its phraseology at will ? May we assign to any portion of it a mystic sense, and if so, what portion, and who are to be the judges ? May it be expounded by any eclectic method any one may adopt for himself ? These questions are not frivolous, they are important ; because the Bible is accepted as a revelation from heaven, of which, no one needs to be

informed, large and important parts as well as single texts and terms are so variously explained as seriously to embarrass common Christians ; the same passages being often cited to sustain opinions hopelessly at variance.

This discrepancy has long worked against the interest of Gospel truth, but the cause of it is not to be found in the Bible itself. It is simply and solely attributable to a false method of expounding that Book, never used to find out the sense of any other book designed for popular instruction, in any language under heaven. If there be no precise, definite, uniform sense in which its phraseology must be understood ; or if it have variable or hidden significations, which can not be reached by the application of the ordinary laws of language, then it is impossible to accept the Bible as a Revelation, for the very good reason that it can not be certainly known what is revealed.

There are those who deny the possibility of a written revelation from God. Were we of the number, our strongest argument would be drawn from the common spiritualizing process, by which men derive a sense from scriptural words, phrases, and paragraphs, not derivable from similar language in any other connection. Only grant the *theory of a double sense*, the argument then is unanswerable.

The subject of Eschatology, or the doctrine of the last things revealed, occupies a prominent place in the New Testament ; and the Holy Ghost thence draws the grand motive for faith, repentance, and a godly life by which we should be actuated. He who substitutes any other, puts himself above the Divine Teacher. What is this motive ? It is the personal coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, (1 Thess. 3 : 13 ; 2 Thess. 2 : 1 ; Jas. 5 : 7, 8 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 16 ; 1 John 2 : 28 ;) but, alas, it meets with little favor in the Church of the present day ; not because it is not scriptural, but because it is cried down as Chiliasm. Paul declares that the crown of glory is reserved for those “ *that love his appearing ;*” but by whom is the attempt now made to impress the fact and doctrine of this *appearing* upon the minds and hearts of the people, that they may cultivate that *love* for it with the possession of which Paul associates the royal gift ?

Some may suppose that it makes no difference what we believe on this matter, so long as we are prepared to die. Is this the implication of Scripture ? Are we simply to be anxious that we may

manage to get into heaven, or that "an entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"? (2 Pet. 1: 11.) Whatever Christ and his Apostles made prominent in their teaching, we are bound to make equally prominent in ours. There is no discretion left to us. Whatever they presented as a motive adapted to regulate the Christian life, we are bound to believe the *best* motive for that purpose, and to urge it accordingly. We therefore can not but think that such substitutions as are now frequently made for it are dishonoring to their example, and weakening to the power of the Gospel, while indifference to it ill comports with the love spoken of by the Apostle, as aforesaid.

Perhaps we ought to explain the circumstance which originated this volume. An occasion was furnished to one of us by invitation to publish an article on this subject—the fourth in the following series—in the *Christian Intelligencer*, in November, 1863. We thought it worth while informally to invite our brethren differing from us, to an amicable and full discussion which should bring our respective views to the test of a close debate, within a narrow compass. Nothing pertinent in reply to our essays appeared, except a few occasional paragraphs in opposition to some points advanced, claiming to dispose of the whole subject in a summary way; although these essays, as occasional contributions, extended over the period of a year, respectfully asking for rebutting arguments all the way through. This, however, in the end was thus explained: "The 'brethren' have flooded us with replies sufficient in amount, perhaps, to fill the columns of this paper weekly for a year. We could not allow such an infinite debate to absorb our space. Some replies we have published, but only a very few of the aggregate multitude sent to us."

This was reasonable, but notwithstanding that respectable weekly paper is not in sympathy with us on this subject, we were most generously and courteously indulged beyond others, it would seem, on the opposite side. Although they were limited for the reason given, and perhaps for other reasons, yet we are bound to believe the very best of their replies were selected. We regret to say, however, that the abusive character and irrelevancy of some, the brevity and far-between appearances of others, made them quite useless as a fair presentation of Postmillenarianism; yet we hoped the deficiency would have been subsequently made up. At

the close of our discussion, and by way of review, the following complimentary remark, for which our thanks are due, finished the subject. The "papers present as forcible a statement of the pre-millennial advent theory as we have seen. But the theory is, we think, untenable, as we shall probably attempt to show." But as the attempt has not been made, we wish here briefly to remark that the word *theory* does not define our faith. It is not a speculation, nor an hypothesis, nor an explanation of phenomena; but it is, as we claim, a manifestation, according to the laws of language, of biblical doctrine revealed by the Holy Ghost relative to the person, offices, and work of Christ—of doctrine historically proved to have prevailed in the Church and over the Christian world for the *first three hundred years* of our era. Now the only way of showing that it is untenable is to disable the essays by proving their falsity in fact and fallacy in argument.

Whatever relates to Christ and him glorified, surely is of as much interest to the Christian as that which respects Christ and him crucified; and whatever concerns his coming and kingdom can never be treated by any of his loyal friends with indifference. We do not believe that there is any piety in sneers.

We publish these essays because it is thought desirable by some who read them as first prepared, that they should be put in a permanent form; because they have not been answered; and because the attempts made as aforesaid have only succeeded in seeming to show them unanswerable. Other attempts may possibly make a different show.

Besides improving them, the authors have subjoined to each essay answers to the principal objections alleged against the doctrine therein taught; and now they respectfully ask a candid perusal by all who are interested not only in the general scheme of scriptural doctrine, but who may be inclined to arrive at just conclusions respecting the grand scope of divine grace as made conspicuous in those portions of the sacred volume which testify of the "coming and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ."

W. R. G.



# CHRISTOCRACY.



## INTRODUCTION.

### THE STUDY OF UNFULFILLED PROPHECY AN IMPORTANT DUTY.

THERE are many who hold that the study of unfulfilled Prophecy is comparatively unimportant, and that it is not their duty to search for and discover its meaning. They seem to think that it is well enough to examine so much of Scriptural Prophecy as has been fulfilled, and particularly for polemic or apologetic purposes; to prove, for instance, that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah, foretold by the prophets; or that the Scriptures are inspired of God, and contain a revelation of the plan of salvation and of man's duty; or the like. All the rest, they appear to think, they may disregard, without becoming culpable; that God's revealed purposes as to the future state of our world, and the reign of Christ in it, although plainly and often predicted, are matters of but trifling importance, and that it makes no difference as to our final salvation whether we adopt one or the other of

the prevailing theories with respect to these deeply interesting subjects.

All, indeed, are not equally competent to examine and handle these topics, since our Lord distributes his gifts as he deems best, and withholds from some the opportunities and means of mental cultivation, which he allows to others. Some, in consequence of the exhausting nature of their daily employments, can not secure the time necessary to a thorough examination of the predictions that remain to be fulfilled. But even these, if their heart leans that way, may avail themselves of the investigations of others.

I. That they are mistaken, however, who suppose that the study of unfulfilled prophecy is of but little importance, is evident from explicit divine commands and declarations relating to such study. "*Search the Scriptures.*" Now, this relates to the whole inspired volume of the Old Testament; prophecy, whether fulfilled or unfulfilled, being included. And how can any who have leisure, and especially those whose office it is to explain the word of God, disregard so clear a precept? Paul tells us that "*all Scripture* is inspired of God, and is profitable," etc. But a large portion of Scripture is prophetic, and *that* must be "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works;" and if prophecy, whether as yet fulfilled or not, be not profitable for the purposes specified, then Paul should have written as follows: Some parts of Scripture are profitable etc. But it is not so written, and the Historic, Didactic, Devotional, and Prophetic portions are all pro-

fitable for growth in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; all useful to make an accomplished man of God, both as to knowledge and action. And he who confines his attention to certain favorite portions of Scripture of his own selection forgets that "all Scripture is inspired of God," and will become dwarfed both in knowledge and holiness.

The apostle Peter speaks of the Prophetic Word, and especially of the *unfulfilled* part of it, or that portion which relates to the second coming of our Lord in power and glory to admit the holy into his everlasting kingdom. (2 Pet. 1 : 19, with 10-18 vs.) (And his epistle is addressed, not to ministers or teachers, but to private Christians.) "*Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place,*" etc. Christians, then, "do well," or discharge a duty enjoined on them by God, when they apply all the powers of their minds to the examination of the Prophetic Word, and exercise the affections which correspond to, or are naturally excited by, the truths foretold; and this with regard to the subjects discussed in the following work, namely, the Coming and Kingdom of Christ. Now, if it be the duty of private Christians to give heed to what God has revealed as to these very subjects, what excuse can exonerate those who are professedly Teachers and Expounders of Holy Scripture?

But some say, How can we understand these things? When our "pastors and teachers" tell us that they are obscure, and we had better let them alone, how can we expect to succeed in this investigation? Certainly, it is a duty to listen attentively to teachers in the church; but it is the duty of no hearer to hold as true any

thing based on the mere say-so of any teacher; only when it is proved from the word of God, must cordial assent be given. The example of the Bereans is a case in point. (Acts 17 : 11.) To affirm that the Prophetic Word in its disclosures as a whole relative to the second personal coming and the everlasting kingdom of Christ is obscure, is to contradict the apostle. With regard to these very topics, he compares it to a lamp shining in a dark place; but a lamp shining in a dark room gives light to all that are in it, who have their eyes open and in use; and so does the Prophetic Word as to these things, to those who give heed to it. But if any shut their eyes, or put the lamp under a bushel, by them, of course, these things can not be seen. Many private Christians are in one respect better prepared to examine these topics than some who may be more learned than themselves; for they have not so many things to unlearn, not so many prejudices of education to lay aside. They should not, therefore, be discouraged, but enter on the duty commanded, with constant prayer for divine illumination, with calmness, and without undue haste. "Study without prayer is atheism, and prayer without study is presumption."

"*Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this Prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.*" (Rev. 1 : 3.) This is declared of *a prophecy*; of a prophecy which is, in many particulars, still *unfulfilled*; of a prophecy in which the disclosure of future events is made by *symbols*, brief explanations of which are occasionally given, from which, and similar explanations in other parts of Scripture, and particularly in Daniel, the reader is left to construct the laws



or rules of interpreting the other symbols; of a prophecy which shows that the redeemed will not be triumphant until Christ himself comes, and takes the empire of the world; of a prophecy which has been greatly misunderstood, because interpreters have been ignorant of the laws of symbolical representation, or disregarded them when known and published. (See D. N. Lord's Exposition of the Apocalypse.) This prophecy is commended to the special reverence and attention of the church of this dispensation by the Lord of that church; from which it is evident that our Saviour cannot be pleased with heedlessness to Prophecy, whether verified as yet or not; and they who desire a special blessing from him must not disregard the Prophetic Word, but give heed to it; must not complain of obscurity, before careful examination, but take the lamp which shines in his house, and by it look for the things revealed, until the great day dawns, and the Sun of Righteousness himself appears in all his glory.

II. From unfulfilled Prophecy we must learn all that we can rely on as to the future. Heaven, or the home prepared for departed saints, is to those still living in the flesh a prophecy unfulfilled. Is it a matter of but little importance whether God has prepared such a home for his people, when the present tabernacle is taken down; whether the soul be torpid or unconscious till the resurrection, in some pit or cavern of the earth; or whether the home ever endures in the heavens to receive every sanctified soul at death? (2 Cor. 5 : 1.) How do we know that the bodies of all the departed saints will arise, be conformed to Christ's glorious body, be reunited to their perfectly

sanctified spirits, and they thus live to all eternity in glory ineffable? It is an unfulfilled prophecy, even to the saints now in heaven; and will be till their and our Redeemer comes. How do we know that Christ will change from mortal to immortal, in an instant, saints living at his second advent? (1 Cor. 15 : 51, etc.) It is an *unfulfilled* prophecy. Is it *darkly predicted*? Surely not. Is it *comparatively unimportant* whether we receive it as revealed, or explain it away by saying that the resurrection not only, but that this change of the mortal body is past already, and must be spiritually understood of a change of heart? And if all would explode such a method of interpretation as to these things, what wrong are we guilty of when we fling to the winds a like method of interpretation applied to the unfulfilled prophecies relative to Christ's second coming and kingdom? And who, retaining their reverence for God's Word, will venture to affirm that it is a trifling thing, or a matter of but little consequence, where we shall be, and how we shall be employed, from the second advent to all eternity; and that, when the Spirit of Christ in the prophets and apostles has made clear and copious revelations on these very subjects?

III. But we may be saved without the knowledge of unfulfilled Prophecy, say some, in a sort of pleading, deprecating tone. We answer, It is not our province to decide a matter which belongs to Christ; but we know that he can not be pleased with indifference to any part of his Word; we know that some, even teachers in his church, "will be saved so as by fire," and "suffer loss;" that their stations in his everlasting

kingdom will not be like those of others who were more zealous for truth and holiness; and surely we should have a holy ambition to shine forever as stars, and, if possible, stars of the first magnitude, as near as may be, to the Sun of Righteousness.

IV. "God," indeed, "has not given us prophecy, that we might know every thing," or become prophets ourselves; but he has given it *that we might know the things which he has been pleased to reveal*; otherwise, the great prophet of the present dispensation was mistaken when he wrote as follows: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, *to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass*"; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." Now, if our Lord has given his church this prophecy for this purpose, is it a matter of comparatively little importance whether we give heed to it or not? Can he be pleased with our neglect of a prophecy designed to enlighten his people as to the divine purposes, or what God intends to permit or effect in this sin-cursed world? Is there no holy curiosity within us, urging us to pray and search into its meaning; or prompting us to ask, When shall the mystery of God be finished? And what is foretold as to the mode of its accomplishment? What events will take place when Christ comes as King and Judge? What will be the employments, honors, and enjoyments of his elect gathered from among all nations till his coming; in other words, what will be the station of the risen and glorified saints in his everlasting kingdom? And where will Christ reign forever? Is it no sin to neglect a prophecy given to enlighten us on these and

other topics; no sin to treat with disrespect and inattention the Great Prophet, the Theanthropos, speaking to us from heaven, and by the disciple whom he loved? And the same reasoning applies to the prophets generally, since the Spirit of Christ was in them all. (1 Pet. 1 : 10-12.)

V. If we ourselves neglect Scriptural Prophecy, one thing is certain, namely, that we will be entirely dependent on the mere opinions, guesses, and prejudices of uninspired men; utterly dependent on those who, perhaps, have themselves given but little attention to prophecy; and hence it will be impossible for us to tell whether we lean our faith simply on the divine testimony, or take blindly as such, for aught we know, the preconceived opinions of men, as ignorant of the Prophetic Word as ourselves, and that when the Lamp shines brightly in God's house! Who, redeemed by the blood of Christ, and sanctified by his Spirit, with the Prophetic Word in his hands, can so far forget his intellectual ability as a man, and his dignity as a Christian, as to consent to be a mere passive recipient of instruction, and especially in reference to God's purposes, which none but inspired men can reveal? Who is willing "to be right only by chance, and without the pleasure of knowing it"? Is this manly? Is it honest? Does it become a Christian?

Influenced by such motives, let us "*buy the truth, and sell it not;*" ever remembering that truth and holiness are as inseparable as light and heat in the beams of the sun. Wherefore, "*Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.*" J. T. D.

## ESSAY I.

### PREVAILING OPINIONS CONCERNING THE MILLENNIUM.

I. ALL or most Christians are agreed on the following heads of doctrine pertaining to Christ's second coming, and the design of it :

1. They all believe that there will be a personal and visible coming of Christ, in great power and glory. (Acts 1 : 11 ; 1 Thess. 4 : 16.)

2. They all believe "that when Christ thus comes, he will bring with him the souls of all his saints, according to Zech. 14 : 5, and 1 Thess. 3 : 13."

3. They all believe "that their bodies shall be immediately raised out of their graves, and the soul and body joined and united together ; and that, though the soul continues, remains, and is in heaven, without the body, yet on earth it shall not be so."

4. Also, "that when it is thus raised, it is raised in glory," and conformed to Christ's glorious body, (Col. 3 : 4 ; Phil. 3 : 21 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 42-49 :) "not thenceforth subject any more to sin or sorrow ; to the want of meat, or drink, or clothing, or houses, or marriage," and the like ; "but they shall be as the angels." (Matt. 22 : 30.)

5. All believe that the saints living at Christ's ad-



vent will, as to their bodies, be changed in an instant from mortal to immortal. (1 Cor. 15 : 51-54.)

6. That Christ will give eternal life to the righteous, and will raise, judge, and condemn to everlasting punishment all the unholy dead of all past ages.

II. But, in reference to the coming of our Lord, and the design of it, his disciples are not agreed as to the following topics :

1. While all believe that there will be a millennium, (Rev. 20 : 1-6,) or a conversion of mankind generally in the thousand years, they are *not agreed* as to Christ's coming in its relation to the millennium; *millenarians*, or *premillenarians*, holding that our Lord will personally appear before the millennium, and in order then to effect the conversion of the world; but *antimillenarians*, or *postmillenarians* maintain that Christ will not personally appear until the thousand years are finished, or not till after the world has been converted; and that mankind generally will be renewed by the instrumentality of the church of this dispensation. This difference of opinion is certainly a very important one, and, like all the rest, to be decided only by a fair and honest interpretation of Scripture pertaining thereto. All, however, are firmly convinced that any and every conversion of men, individual or national, will be effected by the agency of the Spirit of Christ, wherever and whenever it may occur.

2. As to the resurrection, premillenarians hold that the resurrection of the righteous will not only be when Christ comes, but that it will be a thousand years before the resurrection and condemnation of the unholy dead; but postmillenarians maintain that the resurrec-

tion of the righteous and the wicked will be simultaneous, or at once and together, when Christ comes.

3. Premillenarians believe that the risen and glorified saints will, at Christ's coming, be exalted to the office of kings and priests in his everlasting kingdom then to be established on earth; but postmillenarians hold that Christ will never erect such a kingdom and priesthood on earth, but will, soon after his second advent, return once more personally and visibly to heaven, and there reign with his saints.

4. Premillenarians believe that Christ will come as king and judge; to reign on earth in righteousness, as well as to judge and condemn the unholy dead, and his avowed and malignant enemies then living; but postmillenarians believe that our Lord will come only as judge, in the modern signification of that word, and that, when the judicial processes are finished, his work on earth will be done.

5. Premillenarians hold that the earth will be renovated at Christ's coming; restored to more than Eden-like fertility and beauty, become the realm of the Great King, and the everlasting home of his redeemed. But postmillenarians, or at least many of them, believe that then the earth will be utterly destroyed as a habitable globe; while others, seeing the untenableness of this view, agree with the millenarians in believing that then heaven will be our earth purified or renovated.

As to minor points, on both sides, there always has been some diversity of opinion, and will be so long as men's mental powers, diligence, and docility differ; but in these the leading features, or chief outlines, of

the two theories there is, if not uniformity of opinion, yet at least a general and unquestionable agreement.

These opposite and contradictory views of what God has revealed *can not be both right*, or equally conformed to Scriptural prophecy ; *and which of the two contains or exhibits the truth, is by no means a trifling question.* But since one and all appeal to Holy Scripture as the only infallible touchstone of truth, we cherish the hope that God's people will ere long come to a much nearer agreement on these topics. And this our expectation would be connected with assurance, if they should interpret the prophecies relative to Christ's second coming and kingdom in the same manner, or on the same principles, as they do those which relate to his first advent as prophet and priest ; and why this should not be done, we never could understand.

J. T. D.

## ESSAY II.

### THE RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS, AND THE MILLENNIUM AS PORTRAYED IN PROPHECY.

ACTS 3 : 19-21: "Repent, therefore, and turn, for the blotting out of your sins, in order that seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and he may send to you him that has been before appointed, Christ Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the times of the restoration of all things which God hath spoken of by the mouth of his holy prophets since the world began:" (or, from of old, the indefinite past.) This is a literal translation, according to the text of Tischendorf, (N. T. ed. 7,) Lachmann, Griesbach, and Bengel.

The restitution, or restoration here spoken of, can not refer to heaven as the scene or place where it is to occur; for what is out of joint there—what there needs to be brought back to a former or pristine state now lost? The angels that never sinned, now there, are still unfallen, and these "elect angels," together with the disembodied spirits of the saints, are ever progressing in knowledge, holiness, and bliss: surely, no evil, physical or moral, dwells there which requires to be repaired or obliterated; and none there need to be restored to holiness and happiness. (Psalm 16 : 11.)

But there is physical and moral evil on earth; sin and misery in every variety of form have existed among men since Adam fell; and here, in this sin-cursed world, there is, indeed, need for the restoration of all things which God has foretold by his prophets since the world began. Peter tells us that God is to send Christ from heaven to earth for this great purpose; that he will remain in heaven, for such is the decree of God, until the time arrives for this restitution, the author of which, in its beginning, continuance, and perfection, will be Christ Jesus; sent the second time by God to restore a lost world to its former holy and happy condition. (How this passage bears on the restoration of the Jews, may be seen in the proper place.) Our blessed Redeemer came, at his first advent, as priest, to offer up his spotless human nature for man's redemption; at his second advent his mission will be, as king, to begin, continue, and accomplish the removal of all evil, physical and moral, from the earth, that men may be blessed in him, and all nations call him blessed.

1 John 3 : 8. "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, *that he might destroy the works of the devil.*" "But what," says A. Bryant, (to whom we acknowledge ourselves indebted for valuable thoughts,) "are the works of the devil, which our Lord came to destroy? Undoubtedly, all that in the world which is the fruit of his first and subsequent temptations. Sin in all its forms is the work of the devil; for 'he that committeth sin, is of the devil.' And not only sin, but death, the consequence and curse of sin." (Rom. 5 : 12; Heb. 2 : 14-15.) But were these, the works of the



devil, or the effects of his temptations, destroyed at the first advent? Have not sin and death reigned ever since, even as they did before Christ died? John is speaking of *the ultimate design* of our Saviour's manifestation in flesh; he is treating, not of the beginning of his work as Mediator, but of *its consummation*: and this, according to the passage previously quoted, will be effected when he appears again, not in humiliation as priest, but in glory as king.

But will all men, without exception and without distinction, then share in this destruction of the works of the devil? Surely not; for it is written as follows: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, . . . in that day." (2 Thess. 1 : 7-10.) "There is no partiality with God. For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." (Rom. 2 : 11, 12, 16.) In truth, none will share in the restitution of all things but those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life; none but those "appointed to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ," whether they be individuals or nations; for what are the predictions concerning the nations to be saved at Christ's second advent, but declarations and proofs of the divine purpose?

This stumbling-block being thus thrown out of the way, we may now inquire as to what God has revealed concerning the restitution of all things.

"*The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.*" (Gen. 3 : 15.) (There is a pointed and unquestionable allusion to this text in Rom. 16 : 20.) This is the first gospel promise, or prediction of glad tidings to sinful man ; made when Satan, in and by the serpent, had successfully tempted our first parents ; and the prediction intimates that one of woman born should gain a *complete victory*, or crush the head of the old serpent, the devil. The first gospel prediction, then, points to the restoration spoken of by Peter ; a prediction that will not be fulfilled till "the prince of this world shall be cast out" of it, and men be no longer exposed to his temptations.

I. "*In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.*" (Gen. 22 : 18.) "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until the Peace-Maker shall have come ; *and to him (shall) the obedience of the peoples (be).*" (Gen. 49 : 10.) The Redeemer, the conqueror of Satan, is, in these and like promises to the patriarchs, set before us as a man, a descendant of Abraham, and of the tribe of Judah. It is foretold, not that individuals here and there in the world, but that peoples or nations shall obey him ; that all nations of the earth shall be blessed in him ; which remains to be fulfilled. (The accuracy of the translation, "obedience," will be seen by consulting Prov. 30 : 18, the only other place where the word occurs.)

The passages now cited from the book of Genesis may be considered as the fountains of Messianic pro-

phcey relative to our Saviour as conqueror and king, and that, not in heaven, but on earth. The complete victory over Satan is to be effected by him who is the son of Abraham, as to the flesh, and of the tribe of Judah. In him all the nations of the earth are to be blessed with the blessing bestowed on Abraham; that is, they are to be justified and sanctified, as St. Paul explains it. (Gal. 3 : 8, 13-16.) And this restoration of the Gentiles, or nations, to the lost moral image of God, this destruction of the work of the devil, or the effect of his temptation of man in Eden, will, according to Peter, take place at Christ's second coming, and not before: God will send him to accomplish this as the principal part of that which is included in the restitution of all things.

Ps. 72 is a description of King Messiah's reign on earth; (a stream from the fountains before mentioned, as is evident from the 17th verse. There is a reference also to the great promise in 2 Sam. 7 :) "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of *the earth*." He is to "*break in pieces the oppressor*," or "destroy them that destroy the earth," Rev. 11 : 15-18,) that is, wicked rulers, whether in the church or state. Men "shall fear him as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. The righteous shall flourish in his days," or when he reigns, and there shall be "abundance of peace" from henceforth and forever. "His name" (glory or honor) "shall endure forever, and men shall be blessed in him : all nations shall call him blessed. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him : all nations shall serve him." And all this is predicted of him who is a descendant

of David and Solomon. And when shall it be accomplished? "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth." Since, in a simile or comparison, the names of the persons or things compared are always to be literally understood; it follows that the descent of Messiah from heaven to earth here spoken of must be a literal or personal one. When he comes down to our world as king, he will, by his Spirit, cause righteousness and peace to flourish among all nations; his personal presence will thus be as beneficial to men as is the rain to the meadow, and showers to the parched earth. This was not fulfilled at his first advent, nor is it yet accomplished; for no nation as such now serves him, and there are nations that do not even know of his existence. It remains, therefore, to be fulfilled at his second advent, his advent as king.

There are texts which predict the conversion of the nations without designating the epoch or time of that conversion, as Ps. 86 : 9; Mal. 1 : 11, which, of course, can not be used on either side, in this controversy among Christians.

That Israel is to be restored to the moral image of God, is also clearly foretold, Hos. 3 : 4, 5: "For the children of Israel shall abide many days," etc.; "*afterward* shall the children of Israel return and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king; and shall fear Jehovah and his goodness *in the latter days*." The fourth verse is an accurate photograph, or prophetic picture, of the condition of the Israelites, or ten tribes, from their captivity unto this day. But they are, in the latter days, to be no longer unfaithful to God, but seek

him, and reverence him for all his goodness shown to them, and that when they shall adore Messiah their king; which certainly did not take place at his first advent. Zech. 12 : 10-14 contains an unquestionable prediction of the national repentance and conversion of the Jews. But this is foretold to occur when the nations opposed to their restoration to their own land shall attack them in Jerusalem, and when Jehovah Jesus shall descend again to earth and appear on Mount Olivet, from which he formerly ascended. (Zech. 12 : 1-9 and 14 : 1-5.) Isaiah also has a very lucid prophecy concerning their moral renovation. (59 : 20-31.) But when, according to the Prophet, will it take place? When "the Redeemer shall come to Zion." But this promise was not fulfilled at the first advent; it must, therefore, since "God is faithful," be fulfilled at the second.

II. *The removal of physical evils* from the earth is also included in the Restoration of all things; such as sickness, pain, and death, as well as exhausting labor or toil. These the sanctified nations shall not experience during the millennium, nor ever after; for "there shall be no curse." (Rev. 22 : 3.)

*As to Israel:* "The inhabitant" (of Zion, 20th ver.) "shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity:" and this, when Jehovah Jesus shall be their Judge, Lawgiver, King, and Saviour, which he was not at his first advent, (22 ver.) (Isa. 33 : 24.) And if then there shall be no sickness among them, why should we suppose that death will seize them as his prey? "I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy, and I will rejoice in Jeru-



saalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying." "They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble," (the curse pronounced on both man and woman shall be set aside; Gen. 3 : 16, etc. ;) "for they shall be the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them." (Isa. 65.)

*As to the other sanctified nations, Isa. 25 : 6-9, "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make for all peoples a feast," etc. "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces." "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him," etc. When the Redeemer has come to Zion, or at "the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ," the blessed object of hope, so long and ardently watched for, (Tit. 2 : 13;) then the sanctified nations shall partake of a feast of knowledge, holiness, and bliss, which nations never tasted of before; then sorrow will be unknown, and death be vanquished. And when, according to Paul, will this be accomplished? "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." (1 Cor. 15.) But Paul refers particularly to the risen and transformed saints. He does; but he quotes from this prophecy, and thus shows us that he understood it to describe blessings to be enjoyed at Christ's second coming, and during the millennial era as well as forever. Besides, we read elsewhere that the leaves of the tree of life are for the healing of the nations. (Rev. 22.) Now men do not exist as nations in*

heaven; and even if they did, they could not exist there as mortal; neither has God provided any means for curing the mortality of men, or nations of men, in this dispensation; but it is here foretold that he will, when the long-expected Messiah shall have come to restore all things. (How long the nations shall live in the flesh before they eat of the leaves of the tree of life, and are cured of their mortality, is not revealed.) Compare Rev. 21 : 2-4.

III. In our world, before the fall, "all things were very good;" there was no barrenness in the soil; it brought forth no thorns and thistles; but it was fertile and beautiful, and in all respects fitted for the home of man, made in the image of God. But when man fell, the ground was cursed for his sake, and the earth subjected to "vanity," and "the bondage of corruption," or adapted to man's altered state as a sinner. It is predicted, however, that the earth shall be delivered from this curse, and be renovated; or that the restoration of all things includes this also, and that, when Messiah appears again. (Isa. 55 : 12-13, and 35; 65 : 17; 66 : 22; Rom. 8 : 18-23; 2 Pet. 3 : 13.)

IV. The restitution of all things also includes the restoration of man to complete dominion over the inferior or animal creation, then harmless; and this, when Christ reigns on earth. (Isa. 11 : 6-9; 65 : 25, with Gen. 1 : 26.) In the former chapter of Isaiah, the future King of the earth is described as a descendant of David, to appear or be born when the royal house had been cut down, or had ceased to reign; a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots. He shall receive as such, or in his human na-

ture, the Spirit without measure, to qualify him pre-eminently for his office. Accordingly, his administration or government of our world will be characterized by infallible sagacity or wisdom in connection with reverence for God; by perfect impartiality, righteousness, justice, and fidelity; and hence the wicked shall be destroyed, but the meek and lowly be protected. *Then* "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb," etc.

V. The removal of all political evils from the earth is also included in the Restitution of all things, when Christ comes. Then the Messiah "shall break in pieces the oppressor," "destroy them that destroy the earth," and restore to man a most holy and beneficent government, a government of which he, the Sent-Jehovah Jesus, shall have the supreme control: and then shall he appear to, and guide the sanctified nations with more glory than he did our first parents in Eden. (Ps. 72; Rev. 11: 15-18; Isa. 2: 1-4; 4: 2-6; 2: 10-22; 24: 21-23; 42: 13-16; 63: 1-6; Rev. 19: 11-21.) Among these nations, all Israel restored and righteous, shall occupy a distinguished place; and the apostles, risen and glorified, shall, under Christ, rule over the twelve tribes, (Isa. 11: 11-16; 12: 60; Ezek. 34, 36, 37; Matt. 19: 28;) while the other risen and glorified saints shall also be Christ's Bride, or his royal priesthood, and have authority over the nations then living in the flesh, as well as over their rulers, not yet glorified. (Rev. 5: 10; 20: 4-6; 21: 24, 26; Dan. 7: 9-27.)

VI. The restoration of all things includes the banishment of Satan from the earth, or the restoration of the sanctified nations to that state in which our first

parents were before the Tempter had entered the garden of Eden. Then God in flesh, in the future inhabited earth, will reign forever in righteousness; and the usurper or "the prince of this world shall be cast out" of it; out of the realm belonging, by divine right, to Messiah. (Heb. 2 : 5, with 1 : 6, 8; Isa. 24 : 21, 23; Rev. 20 : 1-3; Ps. 2 : 6.)

These appear to be the leading outlines or chief characteristics of the Restoration of all things at Christ's second advent and mission to our world as king; or the millennium as portrayed in prophecy.

*After the thousand years*, the release of Satan for a little while is foretold, as well as the consequences thereof: or the revolt of Gog and Magog, soon and miraculously quelled, together with the final and everlasting confinement of Satan and his angels in hell—never more to seduce the nations: also, the resurrection and judgment of all the unholy dead of all past ages. (Rev. 20 : 7-15.)

*After the resurrection and judgment of the unholy dead* to all the ages of eternity, the Spirit and the Bride, with greater efficacy than before, shall say to mankind, Come: or "the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb," shall purify and refresh their spirits; and the risen and glorified saints, Christ's Bride, shall be guides to them in the way that leadeth to knowledge, holiness, and bliss. And all, at the appointed time, shall become immortal in body, be associated with the glorified, and reign over the rest of mankind, as they come into existence, forever and ever. (Rev. 22 : 1-5, 14, 17.) And *not till then* will the restitution of all things be

*consummated*; not till it thus ends in a perfectly sanctified world, forever delivered from sin and the curse of sin.

Some millenarians suppose that, after the second resurrection, Christ will return to heaven, and reign there; but the book of Revelation, and indeed all prophecy, declares the EARTH to be his realm from his second advent to all eternity. (Rev. 11 : 15.) At his *parousia* and reign on earth, THE THRONE OF GOD AND OF THE LAMB *is to be in the New Jerusalem*, (Rev. 22 : 3;) which city is the symbol of *the risen and glorified saints*, (Rev. 21 : 2-3, 9-10, etc.,) or the tabernacle of God with mankind, then his people; over whom, under Christ, they are to reign as long as Christ reigns on earth, or forever and ever. The Prophetic Word thus leaves us with the restitution of all things on earth under the Glorious and Everlasting Reign of Christ; with the promise of the great King himself, "Surely I come quickly;" and the ardent response of his militant church, "So be it. Come, Lord Jesus."

The principal objections to this synoptic view of Scriptural prophecy concerning the millennium will be considered as we proceed to an examination of the particular topics.

J. T. D.



## ESSAY III.

### THE TRUE METHOD OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION.

THE Bible is the people's book. It was composed for no learned or privileged class, but for all kinds of men whom it can reach. This fact makes it evident that the meaning of the Bible is to be understood by the same means precisely by which we get the sense of any other book. Nor can we suppose that the language used to convey the sentiments of the *sacred* writers may be interpreted in a peculiar way, different from the same language when used to express the ideas of *profane* authors; for this would imply a defeat of the purpose for which the Bible was given.

Certain rules have been laid down by learned men for our guidance in the interpretation of the Bible, which the Church accepts as self-evident. It is proper that we state them in the front of this essay.

ERNESTI says: "There is, in fact, but one and the same method of interpretation common to all books, whatever be their subject, and the same grammatical principles and precepts ought to be the common guide in the interpretation of all." "Theologians are right, therefore, when they affirm the *literal sense*, or that which is derived from the knowledge of words, to be the *only true one*; for that mystical sense, which is in-

correctly called a sense, belongs altogether to the thing, and not to the words."

HOOKE says: "I hold it for a most infallible rule in expositions of sacred Scripture, that when a literal construction will stand, the furthest from the letter is commonly the worst. There is nothing more dangerous and delusive than that art which changes the meaning of words, as alchemy doth or would the substance of metals; making of any thing what it listeth, and bringing in the end all truth to nothing."

BARNES says in his commentary on Matt. 17: "The Scriptures should be taken just as they are, without any attempt to affix a meaning to them which the sacred writers did not intend."

MCCLELLAND, our own honored preceptor, has given these rules in the following forcible language:

1. "The object of interpretation is to give the precise thoughts which the sacred writer intended to express. No other meaning is to be sought but that which *lies in the words themselves as he employed them*. In all cases we should take a sense *from* Scripture rather than bring one *to* it. This rule is fundamental, yet how often is it violated!"

2. "The same method must be followed in expounding Scripture which we employ in searching out the meaning of other books. It was indited to men; it speaks to men in the language of men; and was understood by those to whom in ancient times it was addressed, as they understood any other communication. The design of God in giving it was to communicate certain ideas, in order to which he must speak to us *just as others do*. Words call up to us ideas, not by

any native signification, but by compact, and every one in speaking is supposed to conform to the bargain. If he does not, but employs language in a different sense from that established by common use, he is, to all intents and purposes, a *covenant-breaker*."

3. "The sense of Scripture is, in general, ONE; we are not to assign many meanings to a passage. Words have, indeed, a variety of significations, but they can not have this variety at the same time." "The transgressors of this rule are the Allegorists and Mystics." After giving specimens of their interpretation, he thus continues: "Such schemes are to be utterly rejected. They destroy all certainty of interpretation, taking the ground from beneath our feet, and making Scripture a nose of wax, which every one may twist into the shape that pleases him best."

Prof. STUART says: "The Bible is addressed to our reason and understanding and moral feelings; and, consequently, we are to interpret it in such a way as we do any other book that is addressed to these faculties."

Judge LEWIS, formerly of the district of Louisiana, a gentleman of no ordinary legal acumen, gives the following rules of interpretation:

"1st. We are bound to understand what a speaker or writer says to us in that sense and meaning which he intends to convey; and his meaning and intention are always to be collected from the true and legitimate meaning of the language he employs, as that is settled by universal usage and consent."

"2d. The literal sense is the true and legitimate sense of language, to which we are bound to adhere in

our interpretation of what any writer or speaker says to us, except in those cases where it is *apparent*, from the subject considered, in connection with the language employed, that its author intended it to be understood in some figurative sense."

"3d. If no such intention be *apparent* in what any writer or speaker says, still, if we understand it in its literal sense, it may involve an absurdity, or conflict with something he has stated elsewhere; in such cases, we not only may, but we are bound to reject the literal meaning, and seek for a figurative interpretation that will remove the difficulty, and render consistent all the author has said."

Legal science proceeds upon these rules in the interpretation of all documents, papers, and evidence brought into court, recognizing no other sense to be put upon language but two—*literal* and *figurative*. No sentence or period can be constructed in figurative language, unless there be a figure in it, clearly expressed or implied; and no term in such sentence can have any other than a *literal* signification, because figures of speech are not found in terms, but in their application to subjects to which they do not properly belong. For instance, in the phrase, "Judah is a lion's whelp," all the terms must be understood in a literal sense before we can pronounce upon the figurative character of the expression. Evidently, the figure is not in the term of the subject, but in the *affirmation* made, which can only be ascertained by the literal sense of the terms used.

"It is, in my opinion," says GRESWELL, a learned author often quoted by Alford, "a dangerous and truly objectionable principle on which to proceed, either in

ascertaining the speculative doctrines or in defining the practical duties of revealed religion, to assume that the words of Scripture, in a given instance, and with respect to the particular article of faith or moral obligation dependent upon them, were ever intended to mean either more or less than what, to the common-sense of the great bulk of mankind, for whose benefit and instruction they were given, when properly exercised upon them, they appear to mean, or can really be shown to mean. Nor do I know of any way wherein the common-sense of the great bulk of mankind can ordinarily be exercised upon the words of Scripture to determine their meaning, except by applying to its language the same criterion by which it judges of the sense of words in general; which is their natural, obvious, and primary construction, according to the rules and idiom of the language or dialect in which they happen to be expressed.

“To adopt any other method of arriving at the true sense of the Scripture but this, is to substitute an indefinite and capricious standard of interpretation, taken from I know not what imaginary notions and preconceived opinions of the interpreter himself; and consequently, of as many kinds as there can be peculiar principles and notions of different expositors, all equally arbitrary and precarious, and all equally unsatisfactory to any but those who first set them up and apply them. If there is any one principle of interpretation, which, from the nature of the case, is not liable to vary; which is founded in the reason of things, and can not accommodate itself to the particular tastes or prejudices of individuals, it appears to me to be this, that we take the



words of Scripture as we find them; that we endeavor to ascertain their true grammatical sense, according to the plain and simple and obvious meaning of the language itself."

COLERIDGE says (Aids to Reflection, p. 57): "In arguing with infidels, or with the weak in faith, it is a part of religious prudence, no less than of religious morality, to avoid whatever looks *like* evasion. To retain the *literal* sense, whenever the harmony of Scripture permits, and reason does not forbid, is ever the honestest, and, nine times out of ten, the more rational and frequent interpretation."

Surely it is apparent that common honesty requires all men of the pulpit, of the bar, of the forum, everywhere to interpret language by the same rules, and according to a uniform method. No one ever thinks of doing otherwise, except the minister of the Word of God, whose business is to simplify, by a rational exegesis, that sacred Word to the smallest capacity. We shall never cease wondering at the phenomenon of the FOG, transmitted from generation to generation through our worthy expositors of the Word of God, who have dealt with it as they never dealt with the word of man; who have explained important terms and even large portions of it in direct contravention of their own admitted laws of interpretation, and in such a way as no other expositors deal with the works of the mighty dead, yet alive among us by the force of their genius.

In our apprehension, these plain precepts cut up by the roots that pernicious system of Allegorizing which all men spurn as the true way of expounding any book under heaven except THE BIBLE! By its transmuta-

tive power upon the Word of God, the signs of ideas are wonderfully changed. "The coming of the Son of Man," most generally, does not mean that at all, but it means death! He who is the way, the truth, and the LIFE, is the symbol of *death*; for the coming of death is the coming of the Son of Man!! The Reign of Christ upon the regenerate earth, does not mean that at all; but the prevalence of the Gospel. The throne of David, means the hearts of Christians. The Restoration of the *Jews*, means the conversion of the *Gentiles*. Jerusalem, Zion, the Mountain of the Lord's house, indiscriminately mean the Church. The Kingdom of *Israel*, means the *Gentile dynasty*. Canaan means heaven. The Gospel of the kingdom, signifies the sovereignty of truth. Reigning upon the *earth*, means reigning in *heaven*; and the First Resurrection means the *revival of principles*!!

Most of our popular commentaries will furnish abundant examples of such exposition. Is this handling the Word of God fairly? Is it in conformity with the aforesaid rules? If the Bible is to be received as a revelation from God, should it be subjected to such a process of torture as this? Who of us, admitting the justness of this method, can meet the Jew, when, upon our own principles, he denies that Christ was literally born of a virgin, since this is one of the figurative appellations of the ancient church?

"What is the Bible? A Revelation from God. A REVELATION! If truly so, then it is designed to be *understood*; for if it be not intelligible, it is surely no *revelation*. It is a revelation through the medium of human language; language such as men employ; such as was framed by them, and is used for their purposes.

It is a revelation *by men*, as instruments, and *for men*. It is made *more humano*, because that on any other ground it might as well not be made at all. If the Bible is not a book which is intelligible in the same way as other books are, then it is difficult indeed to see how it is a *revelation*." (Prof. STUART.)

We therefore say, in this connection, that our greatest objection to postmillenarianism is its FALSE METHOD OF INTERPRETATION. It has called into being, or rather superadded a THIRD sense, alleged to be peculiar to the Word of God; but inapplicable to the discovery of the meaning of language in any other book. We beg especial attention to this point. According to the aforesaid obvious rules, there can be but two senses in which ordinary language is understood, namely, *the literal* and *the figurative*. What, then, is this *third* sense of postmillenarianism? It is called *the spiritual*; a sense never sought for out of the language of any book but the Bible; and a sense we feel quite sure the authors of the Bible never thought of. Let it not be supposed that we are denying the distinction between what is called the *letter* and the *spirit* of a passage. When we speak of the former, we mean its obvious grammatical sense; but when we speak of the latter, we mean the general principle which supports truths of the same class as the one uttered in the passage. Hence they *agree* always, and are not, as some suppose, subject to the antagonism existing between the *literal* and *spiritual* of scriptural senses, which *disagree* always.

But what is meant by the *spiritual sense* of a passage? It is not the literal, for that is the meaning of

words as used by common consent; it is not the figurative, for that can not exist without a figure expressed or implied; it is not the symbolic, for that is impossible without a symbol standing out in descriptive language. What then is it? It is the *allegoric* or *mystic* sense derived from Neo-Platonism by Origen, and handed down as THE all-important rule of interpretation necessary to gain the true meaning of the Word of God; and a sense of which his boast was, that "*without it the Mil-lenarians could not be refuted*"! Mark this.

The best way, however, of showing what this *spiritual* sense is, must be to let Postmillenarianism speak for itself. Let us turn to Isa. 63 : 1-6, "I have trodden the wine-press alone; and of the people there was none with me," etc. In this passage we have a vision of a mighty warrior returning from a bloody victory. It is easily understood, interpreted by the rules afore-said. The figurative language is bold and intensely significant. Dr. Alexander says: "The treading of the wine-press alone is an expression often applied in sermons, and in religious books, and in conversation, to our *Saviour's sufferings*. This application is described as customary in his own time by Vitranga, who considers it as having led to the forced exposition of the whole passage by the Fathers and Cocceius as a *description of Christ's passion*." Then he makes this strange assertion: "While the impossibility of such a sense in the original passage can not be too strongly stated, *there is no denying that the figure may be happily accommodated in the way suggested*." Here is at once an irreconcilable contradiction. This *impossible* sense

is pronounced, in the same breath, *quite possible* by the expedient of accommodation!!

Another example we take from "The Second Advent," p. 117: "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Zion is another type of the Church of God, as Jerusalem is also." Same page: "Therefore shall Zion for your sakes be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem become heaps." The inevitable conclusion is, the total destruction of the Church of God!!

Another example of this spiritual sense we give out of McCulloch on Isaiah, who put into the bones of his own performance all the marrow he could get from Vitranga, (Isaiah 65 : 17,) "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth," the spiritual meaning of which is thus stated: "I am about to give my Church a new and beautiful form, by introducing a new dispensation of grace!" "For behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing," that is, "By Jerusalem is meant here the Church of God, under the New Testament." Any authority for this? None stated; and for the best of reasons. But we go on: "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; that is: The wolf, which is an exceeding fierce, rapacious creature, and greedy of devouring its prey, exhibits a striking emblem of the barbarous enemies of the flock of Jesus Christ. The lamb, well known for its innocence, blamelessness, and usefulness, significantly represents the disciples of Jesus Christ, who are distinguished for humility. Respecting persons of these opposite natural dispositions it is foretold that those of the former description, being divested of their



natural ferocity, and converted to the faith and obedience of the Gospel by the power of divine grace, they shall feed together in the green pastures of the Word and ordinances of God, maintaining with each other agreeable intercourse and harmony. The lion exhibits a proper emblem of the powerful, blood-thirsty adversaries of the people of God." What about the Lion of the tribe of Judah? "The bullock may be considered as symbolical of the laborious, useful servants of God. Concerning people of these contrary tempers, our prophet foretells that those of the former sort, being divested of their ferocity and enmity by the influence of the Holy Ghost, and rendered mild and peaceable, they shall familiarly feed together on the same simple provision, and be nourished by the doctrines of the Gospel, which shall be most agreeable to their taste." These doctrines, of course, the author must represent by *straw*.

Now, whatever truth may be in this quotation, it is not gotten out of the text; and however fine it may be thought as evangelical sentiment, as an *exposition* it is ridiculous, because a broad satire upon the language of God's Word and its true interpretation. This, of course, was far from being intended, but that does not help the mischief.

In the same way, the plain, *unadorned* language of prophecy is now treated. For instance, the word *throne*, in Luke 1 : 32, we are told, means the *hearts* of God's people. *Jerusalem*, we are told, signifies the *Gentile Church*. The *Temple* is the *Gentile Church*. *Mount Moriah*, where the Temple stood, means the *Gentile Church*. *Mount Zion*, where the Temple did

not stand, also means the *Gentile Church*. *Israelites* mean *Gentiles*, and their going back to their own land means the *enlargement* of the *Gentile Church*, and all the promises made to the Jews were meant for the Gentiles!!

When we remember that our students prepared for the ministry are taught to expound the Scripture according to the aforesaid rule, the adoption of this absurd method certainly is very strange. We are familiar with that Christian proverb, "The Bible is its own interpreter." But where can we find any one verse between the lids of the Bible that can give the faintest color of plausibility for such exegesis as this? In Rev. 11 : 8, we read of a "city *spiritually* called Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord was crucified;" but this is not spiritualizing Jerusalem. It is simply designating Jerusalem by the names of other *earthly* localities resembling it in the *spirit* of wickedness; or it means that Jerusalem, as a symbol, was called, through the Spirit, Sodom and Egypt. There is no text where the term *πνευματικῶς* may be translated mystically, or metaphorically, or allegorically.

Now, certainly, we may ask for the *authority* by which this mode of interpretation is supported. By what right does any minister undertake to substitute terms where the Holy Ghost has plainly spoken? If the Bible is to be explained in this way, then it is not to be explained as other books; then it can not be the Book of the people; then are the Papists right in prohibiting its circulation, for the best of reasons—lest they should wrest it to their own condemnation; but if it be our duty to circulate it *without* note or comment, we must

do it because it must be explained like other books, and because it is the document from God sent to the people, and must be adapted to their wants, and should be interpreted according to the aforesaid rules of exposition, whose application is at once natural and easy to the unlearned.

We therefore ask by what right does any man venture to substitute terms, and otherwise alter the grammatical sense of the Bible where no figures of speech occur at all? What warrants him to declare that the plain and emphatic promises respecting the return of the Jews to their own land do not mean that at all, but their conversion to Christianity? If one may do these things under the plea of *spiritualizing* the Scriptures, why may not another, on the plea of consistency in following example, go back to Origenism in full, whose author postmillenarians claim to be "the father of Bible Literature"? Origen said, "As man consists, according to Plato, of body, soul, and spirit, so Scripture has a threefold sense;" that is, the *literal*, the *intellectual*, the *allegorical* or *mystic*, as he explains; and this last was further refined by the subdivisions of the *tropological* and *anagogical* senses. By this means, Origen could get rid of the Garden of Eden, of Adam and Eve, with every other historical fact recorded in the first chapter of Genesis. Now, we fancy, it is an easy matter to show that, if the advocates of the *spiritual* sense are right, Origen was right, having this advantage; he carried out the preposterous system to its final and necessary results. *He was a Universalist!* Mr. Sawyer, a Universalist preacher, has published a new and improved version of the New Testament, in which

the terms descriptive of the eternal punishment of the wicked are even stronger than in the common version; yet, by the aid of *spiritualizing*, he maintains that there is no such place of punishment as hell, and no such thing as future punishment at all as we understand it. Unitarians have performed a like achievement, and prove, by the process of *spiritualizing*, that they are right. Swedenborgians do the same thing, and post-millenarians *can not meet them* but by abandoning this *third* sense of Origen, and arguing from the millenarian stand-point.

Our Saviour says, "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, *and shall teach men so*, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." What is the penalty for *teaching them to alter the meaning of the inspired phraseology of Scripture*? All men by nature are interpreters; but no one would by nature ever be led to interpret in this way. There is therefore a fearful responsibility connected with the ministry, with regard to the duty of rightfully expounding the Scriptures. If we *teach men* a rule of interpretation by which every errorist may sustain himself upon the basis of Scripture, we do a far worse thing than merely endangering the interests of our Christian principles, we expose the souls of our hearers to the snares of all error. Hence, in our judgment, postmillenarianism is dangerous, because of its FALSE METHOD OF INTERPRETATION. It gives all into the hands of the infidel, who, by this method, can do what Woolston did—prove that the narrative of Christ's miracles were not designed to be histories, but allegories; nay, it yields aid to the infidel's argument that the Bible is no Reve-

lation, because its language is so enigmatical that it affords no assurance to the understanding of the common people, and therefore can not be a sufficient guide to faith and practice. It violates the chief rules of exposition by which men gain the meaning of written language. Especially is this true as to its treatment of prophetic Scripture. Dr. McClelland, speaking of "the irrational assumption of a *double sense*" in prophecy, well says, that "the notion that prophecy has two senses, a primary and secondary, throws a dark cloud of suspicion over both—almost conceding to the infidel that it is a kind of writing which can not be understood by the ordinary laws of exegesis". "If this were so, Peter, when he spoke of a *sure word* of prophecy, was very unfortunate in his choice of an epithet."

If, then, Millenarians did nothing by their writings but rescue the Scriptures from the pernicious interpretation which passes under the name of spiritualizing the Word of God, they would accomplish an important service.

Having now shown that the prevailing method of biblical interpretation is false, and therefore distracting; we shall, briefly as we can, indicate the true method of expounding our Sacred Volume.

Remembering that the Bible is God's Book given for the instruction of the people, we must perceive that its language should be adapted to the common understanding of men, and must be expounded by the same laws which apply to language in any other book. Human language is either *literal* or *figurative*. No other division can be made or conceived of. Often we hear of *symbolic* language; and often that phrase is



used as synonymous with *figurative* language ; but this is wholly a mistake. There is no such distinction to be made, because the language used to describe a symbol means nothing and explains nothing but the symbol, which is itself the only medium of revelation wherever it occurs. Hence, all such language must be strictly *literal*. It simply describes ; but unless it were always literal, it could not be descriptive. Thus, Rev. 1 : 12, "I saw seven golden candlesticks." The language describes the thing seen ; it means nothing else, and must necessarily be literal. It is not, therefore, figurative in any sense. The symbol is a visible sign, emblem, or representation, which is the medium of revelation. Accordingly in 5 : 20 we have the thing meant, specified thus : "The seven candlesticks which thou *sawest* are the seven churches." Now, as a figure is something imagined but not seen, and a symbol something seen but not imagined, we can readily perceive there is as much impropriety in designating figurative language by the term symbolic as there would be in calling a figure of speech a symbol. We repeat, then, there can be no other use of language but literal and figurative.

1. Literal language is the common mode of expression by which thoughts are made known in its natural signification, the meaning of its words lying on the surface. Thus, John 8 : 24, "God is a Spirit : and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." The native meaning of the words combined expresses the thought, and nothing further is to be looked for.

2. *Figurative* language is a mode of expression in

which thoughts are more vividly conveyed by words naturally inappropriate to the subject spoken of. Thus, 1 John 1 : 5, "God is *light*, and in him is no darkness at all." Now, we know that God is not literally light ; but because light is the medium by which we see and enjoy the world in a manner essential to our happiness, our imagination is called in to assist and intensify a just idea of God by a comparison through which the sensuous shall help the ideal in our comprehension of what God really is. Something, then, is to be looked for beyond the natural meaning of the terms employed, and this is a figure of speech ; because a *form* called up by the *imagination* to assist the *understanding*. Tropes are, therefore, always illustrative. All men use them, the illiterate as well as the learned ; and they need to be well understood, if we would know the sure way of success in mastering the science of interpretation.

In the exposition of language, this general law must never be forgotten : NO PASSAGE CAN BE FIGURATIVE WITHOUT A FIGURE IN IT. Figures of speech, generalized and classified so that they all fall within nine divisions, whose names are derived from the Greek, are artificial *forms* of expression, designed for illustration, beauty, and strength. Each of them has its own law, by which it may be distinguished from all others. Those which are the most important are the following :

1. Metaphor. This is a verbal figure which declares persons, things, and qualities to be that which they only resemble. Thus, "God is light ;" "The tongue is a world of iniquity ;" "Wisdom is a tree of life." It is evident that God, tongue, and wisdom are the *subjects* of affirmations, and must be literally understood ; but

the affirmations themselves, containing terms naturally inappropriate, cannot be so understood. God is not literally light, nor the tongue a world of iniquity, nor is wisdom a tree; but as these things contain qualities familiar to our experience, resembling analogous qualities in the subjects of affirmation not so readily apprehended, they are at once boldly predicated of the subjects. Hence, the law of the Metaphor, that *the figure must always lie in the predicate of a proposition, but never in the subject*. If the subject were figurative as well, it would be impossible to know certainly what was meant by the proposition. Should we assign a typical signification to God, tongue, wisdom, in the examples above given, the sentences would at once become unintelligible. Hence, it is evident that the *literal* subject of a figurative proposition must also be the subject of whatever is meant by the figure in the predicate. This is a self-evident law, and sweeps away a multitude of false interpretations imposed upon the Scriptures by the *spiritualizing* process. In Isaiah 2:2 we have the prediction, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the tops of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills." The prediction evidently relates to Mount Moriah where the Temple stood. The subject here is *literal*, but the predicate is *figurative*. We are told, however, that the subject is a symbol. But this can not be true, because no *vision* is recorded; and the passage is wholly predictive. Therefore, to say that this "mountain" means the Christian Church, is to speak without any authority, and contrary to the law of the metaphor, and, as we shall pres-

ently show, contrary to the Scriptures. Isaiah 1 : 27 : "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts (returning captives) with righteousness." Here, it will be seen, the subject is *literal*, but the predicate *figurative*. But we are told that Zion means the *Church*, which can not be true by the law of the metaphor; for if the subject be figurative, we know not the import of the proposition; there is just as much authority for saying it means the *world*, which is nothing but caprice. Isaiah 62 : 3 : "Thou" (Jerusalem) "shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." Here, again, the subject is literal, the predicate figurative; but we are told that Jerusalem means another thing, and that the prediction refers to the prosperity of the *Christian Church*. Let us see. Micah. 3 : 12 : "Therefore shall *Zion be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.*" This shows the falsity of the spiritualizing method, by which, in violation of the rule of the metaphor, the Christian Church, by the last-named prophecy, shall be brought to desolation according to Postmillenarian exegesis!!!

2. The Simile or Comparison. This figure is the declaration of likeness in one thing to another. Thus, "Our days on earth are *as a shadow*," "He shall be *like a tree planted by the rivers.*" The law of it is, that *the names of the things compared are always to be taken in a literal sense.* The proper understanding and application of this figure deliver another class of scriptural passages from the false glosses imposed upon them. Thus, Isaiah 35 : 1, "The desert shall rejoice and blos-

som as the rose." Here, the desert cannot be taken to mean, by a figure, the flourishing spiritual condition of the Church, as Postmillenarians say, because the standard of comparison, namely, the rose, must be literally understood. As the blossoming of the rose is a literal thing, so must be the blossoming of the desert; but if the desert be figurative, we can not know what is compared.

3. The Hypocatastasis. This figure is an abrupt substitution of an act, object, and condition of one kind for those of another, in a representative phrase. Thus, "It is rowing against wind and tide," a phrase representative of an expression of difficulty in the execution of a design. "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks," showing the folly of resisting God. "Time and tide wait for no man," substituted for the sentiment, that duties must be performed in their proper season. "Bearing the cross," means endurance of self-denial.

There is perhaps no figure of speech more frequently employed in the Scriptures; it is therefore important to be able to distinguish it by the laws of its use.

(1.) The name of the subject of the proposition is always to be literally understood, meaning the person or agency whose acts and conditions are representatively set forth in the predicate, where the figure is always found.

(2.) The acts and conditions used by the figure are wholly different from those for which they are substituted.

The knowledge of this figure, with its laws, is of great consequence to the interpreter, as it will enable



him to expose the fallacy of a multitude of false glosses put upon the Word of God. Micah 4:2: "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." The figure is in the substitution of pointing out roads for instruction, and walking in paths for obedience. The nominatives refer to God, and the converted Israelites, as shown by the context, not to the Christian Church and converts from the Gentiles. Jer. 23:5-8: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell in safety: and this is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." Postmillenarians make Judah and Israel to mean the Christian Church or *mystical* Israel; and the state indicated, to be a state of salvation and spiritual peace, in opposition to the militant state of the Church. But Judah and Israel are proper names, and must be understood literally, because they are nominatives to predicates representative of the quiet possession of their own land, in distinction from the rest of the earth, over which the Branch shall reign and execute judgment. This is shown by the eighth and ninth verses. The passage is therefore not designed, and does not describe the condition of Gentile believers generally who then shall belong to the Christian Church.

4. Allegory. This figure is in the use of agents, acts, and objects of one class, to represent men in another sphere. See the parables of Jotham, Judges

9 : 7-16 ; of Nathan, 2 Sam. 12 : 1-6 ; and of the Sower, Matt. 13 : 3-23.

The laws of the figure are: (1.) The representatives always act in accordance with their nature. (2.) The narrative of the action is in the historic or past tense. (3.) The persons meant in the representation are always indicated.

The knowledge of this figure and its laws will reveal the fallacies of those postmillenarian expositions, where plain declarations and prophetic announcements are treated as allegorical, in which no representative agency or action can be found at all. Whatever is predictive or placed in the future tense can not be allegorical. By this test, a large number of false glosses and interpretations may be detected, and the truth of the Word of God set forth in its just significancy and proper light.

There are five other Figures of Speech, of minor importance, over which we pass to the Symbol; referring the reader to a little volume called "The Laws of Figurative Language, by David N. Lord," which, in its specialty, is worth more than a whole stack of books on Rhetoric and Hermeneutics, from Quintilian down to its immediate predecessor included.

One great source of confusion, producing a vast number of false interpretations, is the total misapprehension of the distinctive nature and office of Symbols, upon the part of the authors of our manuals of Hermeneutics and popular exegetical works. They have almost uniformly treated them as *figures of speech*, designed for the illustration of *principles* and *parties* that should gain ascendancy in the Church and the

world. Nothing is farther from the truth. The Symbol is not a figure of speech designed for *illustration*, but an *object of sense*, set forth as a medium of *prophecy*. It is not the creation of man's imagination, but a real thing presented by God, cognizable to some one or more of the senses of the prophet who describes it; and consequently, the language used to describe it must be literally understood, otherwise we could not know what was meant. Hence, "symbolic language" is a phrase as inaccurate as parabolic language would be, in the exposition of any one of the parables. Symbols *interpret*, but the language descriptive of them does not; and can have no meaning whatever beyond an accurate delineation of the object described.

There are a large number of symbols of various classes in our prophetic books, some one or more of each being explained by inspiration; and these explanations amount to a revelation of the *mode* in which they are to be treated; and this mode, being a key to the Prophecies furnished by the Holy Spirit, can not be ignored any more than other parts of revealed truth. We are thus taught how to use them in bringing out of the treasury things new and old. Inattention to this fact, or a failure rightly to use it, has been the source of conflicting expositions, alike inadequate to a truthful exhibition of the meaning of prophecy.

From these divine explanations we learn *what* symbols are, *what* they represent, and *how* they represent.

1. What they are. They are objects and agents existing in certain relations, and performing certain acts upon the field of prophetic vision, or within the domain of sensation and perception. (Dan. 3 : 5-7 ;

8 : 20, 21.) Hence they are wholly different from figures of speech, such as the Simile, (Matt. 25 : 32,) and the Metaphor, (John 15 : 1,) which are simply modes of expression.

2. What they represent. They represent men and things in the various relations of life, prosperous and calamitous; not abstract principles, or qualities, or systems.

3. *How* they represent. Agents stand for agents; objects for objects; acts for acts; influence for influence; results for results; so that there is a perfect correspondence between the *sign* and its modes of being, doing, suffering, and the *thing signified* in similar modes. Thus an *agent* never stands for an *act*, nor an *act* for a *condition*, nor a *condition* for a *character*.

The laws of the symbol are thus stated in WINTHROP'S ESSAY ON PROPHECIC SYMBOLS, which every student of prophecy should couple with LORD ON FIGURES :

1. The symbol and that which it represents resemble each other in the station they fill, the relation they sustain, and the agencies they exert in their respective spheres.

2. The representative and that which it represents, while the counterpart of each other, are of different species, kinds, or rank, in all cases where the symbol is of such a nature, or is used in such a relation, that it can properly symbolize something different from itself.

3. Symbols that are of such a nature, station, or relation, that there is nothing of an analogous kind that they can represent, symbolize agents, objects, acts, or events of their own kind.

4. When the symbol and that which it symbolizes

differ from each other, the correspondence between the representative and that which it represents still extends to their chief parts; and the general elements or parts of the symbol denote corresponding parts in that which it symbolizes.

5. The names of symbols are their literal and proper names.

6. A single agent, in many instances, symbolizes a body and succession of agents.

7. The periods of time during which representative agents perform representative acts symbolize the periods of time during which the agents denoted by the symbols perform corresponding acts; and, in all cases where such an interpretation is not contradicted by analogy, days symbolize years.

These laws of the symbol have been ascertained by the same inductive process by which Newton discovered the law of gravitation; and whoever takes the trouble to wade through the long investigation, by which they were reached, by the acute editor of "The Theological and Literary Journal," giving the whole a patient review, and, at the same time, attempting to overturn them, will be likely to come to this conclusion—they can not be successfully set aside by the wit of man.

In the application of these rules, it will be found that the use of tropical language, instead of rendering a prophecy obscure, makes it assume an air of clearness, precision, beauty, and strength, that imparts a satisfaction to the investigator he can not otherwise attain. Difficulties will vanish, and the conviction of reachable certainty in interpretation will amply repay all the



labor of research. Besides, a few results will be gained whose tendency will be to enlarge our range of thought. For instance, the process of spiritualizing prophecy will be seen to be mischievous and wrong, the Millennium will be seen to be anterior to the resurrection of the Saints, and the coming of Christ anterior to the Millennium. Our views of Eschatology in general will be invested with a newness and freshness of interest which will lead us, by a natural process, to a closer familiarity with sacred things, and will make us feel the importance of obeying the injunction: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." "*We have a more sure word of prophecy: whereunto YE DO WELL THAT YE TAKE HEED, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.*"

#### OBJECTIONS.

*First Objection.* It has been urged with an ill-becoming confidence that "the bold tropes of Scripture are turned into sober matter-of-fact realities by Millenarians who read Isaiah nearly as they would Blackstone's Commentaries." "Their whole hypothesis rests on no other basis than the assumption, that tropes when found in the Bible tell the literal truth." (*McClelland on Canon and Interp.*)

*Answer.* Great men often make great mistakes, and when one finds that he has been led into gross error by their teachings, and thus led to do injustice to others, his grief is very apt to alternate with indignation. There never was a more unjust and absurd charge

made, for the author might as well have written them down as pitiable simpletons. We can not conceal our fears, that our worthy instructor, in this particular, was not exactly honest; for he could not but have known that from our own day back to the Reformation, not to speak of the early ages of the Christian Church, many learned divines, like Horsley, Toplady, Auberlin, and others, earnestly contended for this faith. We utterly deny his statements. Millenarians believe that the Scriptures can be properly explained in no other way than by a strict adherence to the established rules of exegesis, and that all figures and symbols must be treated as such, in conformity with the laws of their nature. They do not label them indiscriminately with the convenient term *metaphorical*, nor do they confound the figurative and symbolical, nor do they ever foist a false figure into language of simple structure where a real one can not be found, to meet the exigencies of a system. They do not say that Zion means the Church; that Jerusalem which contained Zion means the Church; and that the land of Israel which contained Jerusalem which contained Zion also means the Church. They affirm this to be a gross abuse of language, being nothing else than the mysticism of Origen, and the folly of asserting things to be symbolical, where the laws of symbol can not possibly apply. They hold that COMPARISON, METAPHOR, METONYMY, SYNECDOCHE, HYPERBOLE, ALLEGORY, APOSTROPHE, HYPOCATASTASIS, and PERSONIFICATION, must be understood by every one who would arrive at just conclusions in expounding the language of the Bible; for in no other can examples so abundant, rich, and beautiful be found,

where these figures are presented in all their distinctiveness without mixture or confusion. Where none of them can be found by the laws which determine their existence, language, sacred as well as secular, must be taken according to the obvious meaning of its terms.

*Second Objection.* "Paul himself *allegorized* the Scriptures. For instance, in Gal. 4 : 22-27, he calls Sarah and Hagar 'the two covenants;' and says that 'Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is,' etc., 'which things,' says he, 'are an *allegory*.' We have, then, very good authority for this mode of interpretation."

*Answer.* This is, at first blush, a very plausible objection, and taken to be fatal to what we have advanced; but it fails to justify the practice we condemn.

1. Paul is here said to allegorize historical personages and places; but *that is to be proved*, not taken for granted. Supposing him, however, to be the real author of the allegory in question, it will be conceded he used it by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. No one, then, can safely follow his example without the same infallible guidance. Origen and Cocceius made the attempt, and we know the result.

2. Paul, however, we believe, only *quoted* this allegory for the purpose of confuting his adversaries. In that case the objection falls. It is well known that Jewish writers abounded in allegorical annotations. There is nothing in the text to forbid the belief that Paul quoted from some Jewish commentator's explanation of Isaiah 54 : 1, a text quoted immediately after the aforesaid allegory, with a view to confound the Juda-

izers on their own principles, who were troubling his Galatian converts. His example, then, is no argument in favor of uninspired men who spiritualize sacred history. Moreover, our common reading of this passage is faulty. It ought to have been rendered, "*Which things are allegorized,*" leaving it undetermined who did it. Now, if a true history be allegorized, that does not convert it into allegory, but makes it a *type*; for an allegory is a fictitious narrative, or a figure in which fact is shadowed forth by fiction. It is, therefore, *parabolic* illustration. It also makes certain objects in given relations pictures of other objects or things in similar relations. It therefore embraces *typical* illustration as well. This last, namely, a lively resemblance, is the thing meant by Paul. Hence, it is clear, whether he invent or borrow the figure in Gal. 4, his example can not justify the practice of spiritualizing the Scriptures. See Calvin *in loco*. Dr. McClelland's rule respecting this figure is so obviously correct, that it need only be cited against this objection: "*Never seek for it; nor turn into allegory what admits of being understood in a plain and obvious sense.*"

*Third Objection.* "Millenarians interpret prophecy so literally that they turn it into absurdity." It is thought this can be made to appear by examples. Thus the last-named author writes, (*Canon and Interp.*, p. 290,) "In the latter part of the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, we have a magnificent account of the martial gathering of the Jews, under the standard of the Messiah, and their brilliant conquests over enemies. The question is, whether we must understand it literally. Try the principle upon the fourteenth verse: 'But they shall fly

upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west ; they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab ; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.' These were the ancient enemies of the theocracy, and are, according to our view, selected by the poet, with great taste and appropriateness, as representatives of every thing opposed to the peace and happiness of the covenant people, when they shall have submitted themselves to Christ. If wrong in this, we see no alternative but to expect, along with the resurrection of the Martyrs, that of all the savage clans that infested Israel during her national existence."

*Answer.* We adhere to the rule already quoted from this author: "In *all* cases we should take a sense *from* Scripture rather than bring one *to* it. This rule is fundamental, yet how often is it violated!" The context is a glowing description of the restoration of the Israelites to their own land, not of their subjection to Christ. But because the defunct savage clans are represented as the enemies of Israel whom they shall conquer in that day, and whose resurrection is said to be necessary to a literal fulfillment of the prophecy, the whole must be interpreted figuratively, to the great confusion of Millenarians. Let us see.

At the time the prophet wrote, these old nations were in existence, deriving their names from the countries they occupied. Now, there was a clear necessity imposed upon the prophet, that if he would describe the inhabitants living in those lands hundreds of years afterward, he must designate them by names that were current in his own day, or employ a circumlocution, which it were best to avoid. This is quite readily un-



derstood. We now talk about Hungarians and Poles, though Hungary and Poland are blotted out of the map of Europe. If, during their national existence, a prophet had arisen among us describing the people that shall inhabit those lands a thousand years hence, what would he have called them but Hungarians and Poles, irrespective of every change that might occur during centuries? If Egyptians had been mentioned in the prophecy in question instead of Philistines, the objection would not have been raised. But if the present inhabitants of Philistia be not Philistines, can the modern people of Egypt be Egyptians, or those of Persia, Persians? Does the alteration of a name affect nationality? All these countries have changed their inhabitants many times, and manners and customs also; but no matter what changes or revolutions might occur, the names of countries gave designation to their inhabitants for all time, in the language of prophecy, and that by necessity, if the prophets would have their predictions understood by those to whom they were first addressed. Therefore, the Moabites, Edomites, Philistines, etc., mean the nations that shall be located, at the time of Israel's restoration, in those lands known by the names that they had at the time when the Prophet wrote. If, then, nothing stands in the way of a literal interpretation of this prediction but the "*resurrection of savage clans*," it is amazing that the ingenuity of the objector did not come in to save him from the absurdity of violating his own rule.

*Fourth Objection.* "The literal method of interpretation, as urged by Millenarians, is contradicted by Christ himself. The last prophecy of Malachi, 'Behold, I will

send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord,' etc., is thus interpreted by Him, Matt. 11 : 14, ' And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.' "

*Answer.* This is the most formidable objection in the mouth of gainsaying, and is regarded as insuperable, and putting an end to the argument against allegoric interpretation. But it will be found to be more troublesome to postmillenarians than to us.

1. The prophecy of Malachi 4 : 5, *without figure or symbol*, is most explicitly affirmative of the fact, that God will send Elijah the prophet personally to the Jewish nation, before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. This day is thus described in the first verse : " Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven ; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble : and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Third verse : " Ye shall tread down the wicked ; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." It is clear that this day is to be one of total destruction to the wicked ; and that the Jews, perfectly triumphant over their enemies, shall so absolutely crush them, that they shall be as ashes under foot. Just before this day, God is to send to the favored nation Elijah the Tishbite, one of their old prophets. Let it be observed that this prediction is a *language* prophecy, for there is no symbol described ; and that it is announced in *literal* terms, because there is no figure in it.

Now, if the mission of John the Baptist was the ful-

fillment of the promise respecting the mission of Elijah, then the great and terrible day of the Lord must have come when Christ appeared; for he is the Lord spoken of in the prophecy, and the mission of Elijah was to occur immediately before that day.

Upon the theory in question, John, by the use of words which Elijah is to utter, proved himself to be the Elijah meant. This being so, the following occurrences indubitably must have taken place. (1.) The day of Christ must have been a day of literal conflagration, annihilating the wicked, both root and branch; (2.) The Jews must have feared the Lord Christ, and trod down the wicked in a thorough triumph, as shown by the comparison. All this must have taken place, or *no* such day shall ever come. Here is a dilemma. Our brethren must abandon their interpretation, or deny the day of judgment as set forth by Malachi. They must maintain that all these calamities to the wicked, and all this prosperity to the Jews, who must have been attached to Christ in his day, actually occurred, or give up the prophecy as an untruth. Yet, refusing to do either, some of them say, "The great and terrible day of the Lord means the destruction of Jerusalem." But this did not occur until seventy years after the coming of John. During all that time, the Jews, so far from fearing the Lord, hated him and his cause with perfect hatred. When that catastrophe took place, the Jews were the ones destroyed, not their enemies, and made as ashes under the feet of the enemy: the wicked were not then burnt up; nay, they flourished root and branch. And since such a day as Malachi has described has never yet

taken place, we repeat, that our brethren must give up their exposition, or deny the veracity of the prophet. If they do the first, then all the difficulty in Christ's language by the objection, becomes their own; if they do the second, they deny the faith and turn infidels at once; if they do neither, they are not entitled to advance this passage against us in argument for their own position. "The baptism of John, was it from heaven or from men, answer me?" said Christ. The Pharisees replied, "We can not tell." "Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things." The reason was, because since they could not get out of the dilemma, they were not entitled to the explanation they sought. In like manner, our brethren are not entitled to an objection which, however heavily they may think it hangs upon our doctrine, is clearly cumbersome to their own.

2. The declaration of Christ, in Matt. 11 : 14, does not necessarily imply that the real Elijah will not come, according to the literal meaning of the prophecy; for when "his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?" Christ expressly confirmed the opinion of these scribes. "Elias *truly* (really) *shall first come*, and restore all things. But," he immediately added, Matt. 17 : 12, "I say unto you, Elias is come already." Now, we do not say there is no difficulty here; but we do say that Christ's words can not be so explained as to impeach the veracity of the prophet which he indorsed; and therefore the following explanation is satisfactory.

When our Lord said, "If ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come;" or, "If ye will bear to

be told it, this is Elijah that was to come," (Campbell *in loco*,) he did not affirm that the prophecy of Malachi was so *fulfilled* in the mission of John, that the personal Elijah should never come. He did not say, "For this is he of whom it is written;" but he implied that John was an Elijah in name, office, spirit, and power, (Luke 1 : 17;) that is, the mission of John was a verification of the prophecy, its *πληρωμα*, or fill-full-ment, like the heaping up of a glass of water in excess of its fullness. The *first* advent of Christ to suffer, had its Elijah representatively in John, who also suffered. The Jews *did not know* either the Messiah or his forerunner; hence they did to them what they listed. The second advent of Christ will have its Elijah in the person of the old Prophet, whom they shall know, as well as their Messiah, when they shall say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

The Baptist, we are told, was a "man sent from God." He must, therefore, have understood his own character and mission. When asked by the Jews, who as confidently looked for the personal Elijah as they did for the Messiah, "Art thou that prophet?" he answered, "No;" but affirmed that he was the "*voice*" of that prophet, "crying in the wilderness," thus quoting and applying to himself Isaiah 40 : 3, which is shown to be descriptive of the office of Elijah, by comparing Malachi 3 : 1 and 4 : 5. John thus emphatically denies that he was Elias, and yet implies that he came in his office, spirit, and power, just as Christ did when he said, "*Elias* truly (really) *shall first come*. But if ye can receive it, Elias has come already." It surely will not do to admit one declaration of Christ and re-



ject the other; for both can not refer to the same events, as the tenses of the verbs show. Hence it follows that by the mission of John the prophecy of Malachi was fulfilled precisely in the same way as, by Herod's slaughter of children, Jer. 31 : 15 was fulfilled. (See Matt. 2 : 17, 18.) The objection, therefore, amounts to nothing.

But Professor Fairbairn, in his work on Prophecy, (republished in this country by Carlton & Porter,) has a different way of disposing of this prediction of Malachi, which, while on the subject, we shall notice. In a section headed *Poetical Elevation*, he thus writes, p. 141 : " Here (Mal. 4 : 5) the past and the future are contemplated as at once present to the eye of the prophet; generations far asunder in point of time appear together upon the same scene. On the one side the godly fathers of the Jewish people, and on the other their degenerate offspring in the days of the prophet and subsequent times; the two alienated from each other on account of the entirely different feeling respectively entertained by them toward the covenant of God; and to effect a proper reconciliation between them, and have all, if possible, prepared for the coming of the Lord, the sending anew of him who was preëminently the prophet of reformation, the man whose whole striving in a like degenerate age was directed to the object of having the hearts of the people turned back again to the God of their fathers, in whom, as the only proper centre of union, the hearts of fathers and children could meet and embrace each other. *Thus understood*, the meaning of the passage is plain; and the mode of representation is so

natural, so accordant with the genius of the prophecy, in spirit also so entirely at one with the tendency of the writings of Malachi, which perpetually aim at the restoration of a backsliding people to the bond of the covenant and the piety of better times, that it at once commends itself to our approval. But it is altogether of a piece. The poetic element which moulds it into such a peculiar form belongs to one part as well as another; *it is throughout an ideal representation.* And we should no more imagine that, for its fulfillment, the literal Elijah was at some future time to resume his place among men as a preacher of repentance, than that the pious forefathers of Israel were personally to arise from the dead."

So, then, the upshot of this verbose exposition is just to deny the truth of the prophecy. "*It is throughout an ideal representation!!*" yet is to be *fulfilled*. How such a fulfillment is to take place we are left to conjecture. Was John the Baptist a fulfillment of an ideal representation? Was the Lord himself and the great day spoken of an ideal representation? "Thus understood," the infidel might say, "the whole scheme of prophecy must be given up; for there is nothing in the way of prophecy to be found where a literal fulfillment is more demanded by the laws of interpretation than in this passage." Just look at it. The first half of this chapter has very little of "poetic elevation," and the next half absolutely none at all. "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments." To call this poetry, is absurd. What then would be prose? The next verse contains the predic-

tion and promise, so plainly a language-prophecy, without figure or symbol, that it is amazing that a man of the professor's position could venture so much for the support of an opinion absolutely at variance with common sense. His exposition is at once seen to be not only inadmissible upon philological grounds, but on the ground of its *destructive* tendency, being subversive of revelation itself. He tells us *it is* THROUGHOUT an ideal representation. If so, then there will be no such day as is set forth in the prophecy. The sun of righteousness is a mere symbol of favor and prosperity; and the fervor of "poetic elevation" renders it altogether uncertain what is meant by this droll romancing in an imaginary scene, where the early fathers and late descendants, separated by thousands of years, and between whom there could have been no hostility, are imaginatively brought together for reconciliation by an imaginative Elijah. If it be any thing short of perverting the Word of God to treat any plain prosaic declaration in this way, we can not imagine what perversion means. We see not why every other prophecy may not be put to the same species of torture, and thus be forced to yield a sense whose only benefit will be demonstration that it reveals nothing, and that the predictions of the Bible are the mere rhapsodies of *poetic elevation!*

Try this method of spiritualizing upon Isaiah 7 : 14 : "The Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel," etc. Matthew says this prediction was fulfilled in the birth of Christ. But this can be disputed successfully by the Jew adopting the argu-

ment of Professor F. He would say "that the term virgin was used as an appropriate figure of the Jewish people; and what more befitting the 'poetic elevation' of the prophet than a picture of this representative virgin with a son brought forth supernaturally, whose days of childhood should not pass before the fears of Ahaz should be relieved by the destruction of the confederate kings whom he abhorred? It was wholly an *ideal representation*, designed to be a sign for a speedy deliverance noted in the context. Therefore to take this ideal representation out of the series as belonging to the time of Ahaz, and, contrary to the obvious implications of the history, to make it a prediction of a literal birth, by a literal virgin, of a child whose arrival at the period of youth could not be a sign to Ahaz, nor to any one else, at any time, of any thing that should pertain to a destruction similar to the one spoken of by Isaiah, is utterly preposterous." What can the professor reply? "This *ideal representation*, so common to all the prophets, can never be turned into a prediction of matter of fact. The assumption is monstrous!" says the Jew. "But if it can be brought to set aside so plain a prediction as the coming of Elijah, much more can it be urged against Matthew's use of Isaiah 7: 14 as predictive of the birth of Christ." How would Professor F. evade this application of his spiritualizing process? Accepting his method of exegesis, the Jew could prove that nothing was written in the law of Moses and in the prophets and in the psalms concerning Jesus of Nazareth.

Theodore Parker says: "It has never been shown that there is, in the whole of the Old Testament, one single instance that, in the plain and natural sense

of the words, foretells the birth, life, or death of Jesus of Nazareth." And Professor F. complains of him for this infidel assertion. But Theodore Parker arrived at his conclusions upon Professor Fairbairn's own method of interpreting prophecy. Surely it ought to be plain, how dangerous that principle of exposition is, which postmillenarians assume. *Poetical elevation and ideal representation* are weapons of offense and defense which infidels will thankfully accept. Oh! if the Bible could speak, should we not hear the exclamation, "Save me from my friends"?

W. R. G.



## ESSAY IV.

### THE PREMILLENNIAL ADVENT OF CHRIST.

WILL the second coming of our Saviour precede or follow the millennium? Or, to express it in another form, Will the nations be truly converted to God before his coming, or after it? Is Christ to come in order to introduce the millennium, or is the world to be renewed by the preaching of the Gospel during the present dispensation? As to this important branch of the general subject, the question we intend to discuss is not what opinions are entertained of it by any denomination of Christians, but, "What saith the Scripture?" "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

After long and careful study of this and kindred topics, we are fully convinced that our Lord's coming will *precede* the millennium; and this, we think, the Holy Spirit teaches in the sacred Scriptures.

I. For the illustration and confirmation of this proposition, permit me to call the reader's attention to the commission given by our Lord to his apostles, and in them to all his faithful ministers. (Matt. 28 : 18-20 ; Mark 16 : 15-16.) They are required to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature ; to

make disciples of all nations by baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and by teaching them to observe all that Christ has commanded. Their duty, then, is very clear, easily deducible from the terms of their commission; and herein there is no discrepancy of judgment, or difference of opinion. Our Lord adds an encouraging motive: "Lo, I am with you all the days until the end of the age." (This is the literal translation.) That is, I, as God, am with you during all this dispensation until its termination, protecting and assisting you in your work as my ministers. "The end of the age" is the time in which the present dispensation will cease, and which all admit is to be at Christ's coming. But does the Head of the Church, in the record we have of this commission, give us any ground to expect that the preaching of the Gospel in this age or dispensation will be accompanied or followed by the conversion of the world? In our judgment, he does not. He intimates, indeed, in Matthew, that there will be success, but not *such* success. And that we are not mistaken in so interpreting his words, seems evident from what we read in Mark: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned." Here, it must be remembered, our Lord is professedly speaking of the *effects* that will accompany his gospel down to the end of the age, or before and up to the time of his coming; and what he declares is, that some individuals among all nations to whom the Gospel comes will believe it, and others will not; but not a word does he speak of the faith, or conversion to God, of all the nations to whom in this dispensation the

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Gospel comes. Now, since the moral renovation of the nations is clearly predicted in Holy Scripture, and since God is faithful, it follows that *that conversion* will take place in a future dispensation, to be established at Christ's second coming.

It is hardly necessary to add that the history of the Church for eighteen hundred years has exactly corresponded to the declaration of our Saviour as to the effects of a preached gospel in this dispensation; that history being a wonderful commentary on his words in Mark; for in all this period not so much as one nation has been truly converted unto God, though multitudes of individuals have indeed believed.

II. It seems to be revealed in Scripture, that it is not the design of God, during this present dispensation, to employ the Gospel in the conversion of the nations as such, but rather to gather from all of them to whom the Word is preached an *Elect Church*. That such is God's intention, is taught, Ròm. 9 : 22-24 : " But if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had before prepared for glory, even us, whom he called, not only out of the Jews, but also out of the Gentiles." Here the apostle in substance says, If this be God's will or purpose, what right have you to object? If he effectually calls from among Jews and Gentiles his people, or renews them by his Gospel during this dispensation, does he not exercise an unquestionable right belonging to him as God? We should never forget, however, that

the effectual calling of an elect church out of all nations is *not* the conversion of those nations. Now, if the doctrine of election be true, and a fact indisputably appertaining to the present dispensation, then, if the world is to be converted, there must be another dispensation appointed of God for that end; for it is self-evident that such conversion can not take place while only an election is gathered. That this is one main design of the present dispensation was acknowledged by the apostolic church, assembled in council. (Acts 15 : 14.) Our Saviour also predicts as follows: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole inhabited earth, *for a witness to all the nations*; and then shall the end come:" that is, the end of the age, or present dispensation; as is clear from the question which he is answering. (Matt. 24 : 14, with 3d ver.) It shall be preached *for a witness*, or testimony, *to the inhabitants of earth*; to the salvation of those who believe it, and to the condemnation of those who reject it. Christ does *not* say, For the conversion of all the nations, but for a witness to them, according to the way they treat it. And the very form of speech implies that it will not, in this age, be generally or universally embraced. But if the design of God in employing the Gospel during the present economy of his grace be as just proved, then how can the many predictions relative to the conversion of the world be ever fulfilled unless Christ himself comes for that great, glorious, and beneficent purpose? And will not that coming for that end constitute another and a better dispensation?

III. Lest any should suppose that this partial success of the Gospel, this gathering of an elect church,

will not continue to the end of the present dispensation, but that it will, before its close, be distinguished by the conversion of the world, we direct the attention of the reader to the Parable of the Tares, thus explained by our Lord, Matt. 13 : 37-43 : "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man ; the field is the world ; the good seed are the children of the kingdom ; but the tares are the children of the wicked one ; the enemy that sowed them is the devil ; the harvest is the end of the age ; and the reapers are angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the age. The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom" (his field, the world, or the territory belonging to him as Messiah, Ps. 2 : 8-9) "all the stumbling-blocks, and them that do iniquity," etc.

In this infallible exposition, our Lord does not say that mankind generally will be renewed before his advent ; but, on the contrary, he foretells that in the world, even down to the end of the age, the righteous and the wicked will be intermingled, like wheat and tares growing together in a field ; that the separation of the children of the kingdom from the children of the devil will not occur until his coming ; and further, that down to that great day, there will be in the world stumbling-blocks, or those enticing to sin, (Satan and his angels, as well as false teachers, Rom. 16 : 17,) and them that do iniquity ; and that such will not be taken out of the way till Christ sends forth his angels for that purpose.

Besides, our Lord elsewhere gives us a description of the moral state of the world, or the character of the



great mass of mankind, down to his *Parousia*, or personal coming. "But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." (Matt. 24: 37, etc.) "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed." (Luke 17: 28, etc.) Now, as intense worldly-mindedness and devotion to sensual pleasures, with a consequent forgetfulness of God, characterized the men who lived before and up to the flood, and the destruction of Sodom; so our Lord tells us that these sins will characterize those who live before his appearing, and up to the day in which he shall be revealed. Such a reign of Mammon and Pleasure is not a reign of righteousness, not a conversion of the world unto God. If, then, the nations are to serve our Redeemer, if they are to be renewed and blessed in him, it must be when he appears the second time to establish his kingdom.

IV. And where is it revealed that the Church of this dispensation will be a conquering Church, or be instrumental in the conversion of the world before Christ comes? The description given in the New Testament is very different. She is set before us as

struggling with enemies, as oppressed and persecuted, as in the minority until her Redeemer comes. This is pointedly and unambiguously taught in the parable of the unjust judge and the importunate widow. (Luke 18 : 1-8.) "He also spake a parable to them" (to the disciples, Luke 17 : 22-36) "as to the necessity of their always praying, and not fainting," etc. Our Lord, indeed, has not given a formal or particular explanation of the parable, but, at the end of it, he adds these words: "And shall not God avenge" (do justice to) "his own elect, who cry day and night unto him; and have patience with them?" (So the verb in the original, with the same grammatical construction, is translated, Matt. 18 : 26-29.) "I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. But when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" From this practical application of the parable, its general drift or meaning is obvious. The widow, or bereaved one, represents God's chosen, or the true Church, down to the time of Christ's coming; the lawless and godless judge, her oppressors and persecutors, continuing to the same period. Not till the Son of Man comes will God avenge the wrongs done to her; and, instead of the faith prevailing by her instrumentality on earth, Christ himself will hardly be able to find it. (Compare Matt. 7 : 13-14; Luke 9 : 23-26; Acts 14 : 22; 2 Tim. 3 : 12; 2 Tim. 3 : 1-8; 1 Pet. 4 : 12-19, and 5 : 8-9.) The strict version is as follows: "Shall he find *the faith* upon (or over) the earth?" (And the question is preceded by a particle requiring a negative answer, as is evident from Gal. 2 : 17; Acts 8 : 30 with 31 ver.) Some explain as above: Shall he find the

faith generally embraced by men? (See Calvin *in loco*.) Others thus: When the Son of Man cometh, (Dan. 7,) shall he find the faith of his coming as King and Judge, the faith exhibited in the parable by the cry of God's elect for their deliverance from their enemies and persecutors; shall he find this faith existing on earth? (Compare 2 Pet. 3.) Whether we adopt the first or second explanation, it is equally fatal to the postmillennial theory.

The paragraph contained in Matt. 24 : 4-14, is a miniature likeness, or a prophetic photograph, (if we may so speak,) of the state of our world, ecclesiastical, political, and physical, down to the end of this dispensation, or up to Christ's second coming; a photograph taken and painted in its chief features by the Great Prophet himself.

*As to the world political, down to his Parousia*, he foretells wars and rumors of wars; nation rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; from which we learn that the nations will never live in peace until he, the Prince of Peace, has come. (Compare Isa. 2, Mic. 4.) *As to the world physical, down to his Parousia*, we read that there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. *As to the world ecclesiastical, or the church, down to his Parousia*, he predicts that his true disciples shall be persecuted, and put to death, and be hated by all nations for his name's sake; that many professors of Christianity shall, in these circumstances, be offended, betray, and hate one another. Nay, more, *because of abounding iniquity, the love of many shall wax cold*—even of genuine disciples. And, although the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole

inhabited earth, for a witness to all the nations, still false Christs and false prophets will arise and *deceive many*; and all nations to whom the Gospel comes will *hate*, not love, those who live godly in Christ Jesus.

Instead, then, of the Church being instrumental in the conversion of mankind generally before Christ comes, *her apostasy, dissension, and lukewarmness* are predicted by the Redeemer himself; while the picture he sets before us of the nations proves that the great mass of mankind will reject the Gospel, since they will war with one another and persecute his people. How perfectly inconsistent is all this with the postmillenarian doctrine!

V. There will be no conversion of the nations until Satan is bound and cast from the earth into the bottomless pit or abyss. (Rev. 20.) *For what purpose* will he be confined there during the thousand years? *That he may no longer deceive the nations* during that period. Up to that time, then, he will deceive the nations, so that their conversion can not occur until his imprisonment. But at what great epoch will this binding and confinement take place? At the resurrection of the just; for so the vision, "I saw thrones," etc., is explained. "*This is the first resurrection.* Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." We know that there is a very great diversity of opinion as to the right interpretation of this vision; but what we contend for is, that the words, "This is the first resurrection," etc., are the explanation given by the Holy Spirit himself, and

therefore the only true interpretation. Thus it is said, "The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches;" that is, they are the symbols or representatives of the messengers and the churches. Precisely so here, "This is the first resurrection;" that is, This vision is the symbol or representative of the first resurrection. And since all explanations thus given in the Revelation are expressed in *literal* language, it will not do to explain it away by saying that a moral resurrection is intended.

The vision in the latter part of the chapter, "I saw a great white throne," and so on, is often quoted as if it were a proof of a universal and simultaneous resurrection and judgment, both of the righteous and the wicked; but it describes the resurrection and judgment of "*the rest of the dead*," as contrasted with the risen and reigning saints; that is, of the unholy dead, which occurs not until the thousand years are finished. That the unholy dead are only signified in that vision, is clear also from the explanation given both of those to be judged, and of the issue or result of the judgment; the persons spoken being those whose names are not written in the book of life, and who are cast into the lake of fire. Thus it is evident that there will be no conversion of the nations until Satan is bound and imprisoned in the abyss. But that event, as we have shown, will not occur till the resurrection of the saints; and their resurrection will be at Christ's coming, at the *beginning* of the millennium.

VI. There will be no conversion of the nations until



the antichristian powers are destroyed. These powers are both civil and ecclesiastical, and we think it clearly revealed that they will be destroyed at Christ's coming, and not before. We can not, however, enter on this subject now in all its parts; but invite attention to Paul's remarkable prophecy, 2 Thess. 2 : 3-12. Who is the man of sin? Some suppose that the man of sin will be, so to speak, an incarnation of Satan, and that the prophecy, so far as it relates to him, is yet wholly unfulfilled. Others think that the man of sin is the succession of the popes, with the whole papal hierarchy. A decision on this matter is not necessary to our present argument; for whether the man of sin relates to the succession of the popes, or to a single personal antichrist yet to appear, it is clear from the words of the prophecy that this man of sin is to appear after, and be a consequence of the apostasy, or the falling away from the faith; and that he is to be destroyed only at the second personal coming of Christ, or at his *parousia*. "Let no one deceive you by any means; for," (that day shall not be,) "unless the apostasy come first, and hence" (*kai* introducing a consequence) "the man of sin be revealed," etc. (The leaven of this apostasy was even then working, 7th ver.) "Whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." (Paul gives a description of the apostasy, 1 Tim. 4 : 1-5.) Here the *author* of his destruction is foretold, the Lord Jesus; the *mode* of it, by the breath of his mouth, or with the greatest ease, (compare Ps. 33 : 6, 9;) also the *time*, at his *parousia*, or second personal coming. And the word *parousia*, when applied to our Lord in the New

Testament, never, in our judgment, means any thing but his personal presence, arrival, or literal coming; and it is beyond all gainsaying that it is so used in the epistles to the Thessalonians. Now, if *the apostasy* is to *continue up to Christ's coming*, and *the man of sin*, its genuine child or offspring, *how* can the world be converted *before* our Redeemer comes? If the Church itself, or a great portion of it, falls away from the faith; and the man of sin sits in the temple of God and there plays the part of God; and all this up to Christ's parousia; then, how can there be a millennium of holiness and peace before the second advent? Let no one deceive you in any way: it shall never be till Christ appears.

The same truth is taught in Dan. 7: The lawless persecuting power denoted by the eleventh little horn of the fourth beast, is, as Protestants admit, the Papal Antichrist. The inspired explanation is, that *that power will continue and prevail until "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."* Now, at what great epoch will this occur? It will be when the Son of Man comes in the clouds of heaven, and there is given him by the Father "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, *that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him*: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed." Here we are taught that this kingdom is to be on the earth; Christ, the Great King; the risen and glorified saints,

his co-regents ; and the very design of the institution of the kingdom, *the conversion of the nations* ; and, further, that it will continue on earth, from the time of his second coming, forever. Nothing can more explicitly show that the coming of Christ will be premillennial, and that the nations will not be converted until his arrival, than this luminous passage.

But some ask, Is it certain that what Daniel says of the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven, and so on, refers to our Lord's second coming? We answer that Christ himself has so decided it. (Matt. 26 : 63-64.) "The High-Priest said to him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou art the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith to him, Thou hast said it," (or yes.) "But I say to you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven ;" thus referring, beyond all doubt, to Dan. 7 : 13-14.

With these brief arguments, we commend this subject, and all the scriptural prophecies relating to the future kingdom of the Mediator, to the serious and candid attention of our brethren ; being fully persuaded that there are no topics of Holy Writ that need more an unprejudiced, unimpassioned, thorough, and exhaustive investigation.

#### OBJECTIONS.

Having given in the preceding essay some of the principal arguments derived from Scripture as to the second coming of Christ before the millennium, it remains to consider the most common and oft-repeated objections.

I. If Christ is to come before the millennium, why

speed the missionary to countries destitute of the light of the Gospel? Why take so much pains in translating the Scriptures into foreign languages? Why be so diligent in educating men to preach the Gospel both at home and abroad? If, after all, mankind generally are not to be converted by these means before Christ comes, must not the ministry and the Church toil without the hope of a harvest? How discouraging is all this!

Such is the objection. But it is *no answer* to arguments like the preceding. And *any hope or expectation* not founded on God's Word is worthless. We, in common with all Christians, believe most fully in the conversion of the nations; but the question now before us relates to *the time* of that conversion. This has been proved to be at Christ's advent, and not before.

It is supposed, however, that our views have a tendency to cool the heart as to the spread of the Gospel in the world; but it is a mere imagination. Do not premillenarians believe in Christ and in his Word as well as their opponents? *The command of Christ*, "Go ye into all the world," etc., lies deep in the consciences of millenarians, as well as others. How can we think of refusing to obey him who has "all authority in heaven and on earth," and who is the supreme object of our love? And, although we do not expect to see the world converted by the efforts of the ministry and the church of this dispensation, can not our hearts be cheered by being made instrumental in gathering God's chosen ones, and training them "for his kingdom and glory"? This is the harvest, and the only one promised to the ministry before Christ comes. Again: have postmillenarians alone, of all

existing Christians, *love to the souls of men*? Are they only impelled by that motive to labor for their eternal well-being? We, then, as well as they, may be and are influenced powerfully by *the command* of our Redeemer and Lord; we are animated by the cheering *promise* of Christ's help in gathering believers into his church now, to be prepared for his kingdom hereafter; and we, as well as our brethren, *love* those for whom Christ died. To destroy vain grounds of hope, is to make room for the true; so that believers may never falter, nor be unduly discouraged, but ever press on prepared to do and suffer, and be indeed a missionary church. Once more: Can it be that postmillenarians have carefully looked at the principle or assumption that lies under the objection before us? For, surely, they do not intend to say that they are not bound to obey Christ's command, unless he means to make them and other ministers and disciples, in this age of the Church, the honored instruments in the conversion of the world? The measure of our success in preaching the Gospel to men, is not the ground of our obligation to do so. That is Christ's command, and he who disregards it may have a name to live, but he is dead. And where is it revealed that the world is to be thus converted in this dispensation? Nowhere; but the effectual calling of an elect church is predicted, as before shown.

II. But some confidently affirm that the Church has all the means necessary for the conversion of the world in this dispensation, and deem those heretics that doubt or disbelieve it. Is not "the gospel the power of God unto salvation"? Yes, but "to every one that believeth." Prove, then, that the nations as such will believe it



during this dispensation, and we will listen; but a hundred texts like that cited do not at all touch the point in dispute. Is not the Holy Ghost able to convert the nations by the Gospel in this dispensation? Beyond all doubt, he is; but the question is, Is he willing and determined to do so during this dispensation? If so, *where* has he revealed it in the sacred Scriptures? We can not find such a passage, but we read that when Christ comes in the clouds of heaven, and not before, all peoples, nations, and languages shall serve him.

III. It is unbecoming our Lord, say some, to leave his heavenly glory, and come to our world to introduce the millennium; for thus he will be subjected to a second humiliation. Here we should only ask, "What is written?" If "it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings," and that on earth; if it was becoming Christ, as the Mediator between God and men, to teach as the great Prophet, and, as the High-Priest, to offer his spotless human nature as a satisfaction for our sins, how can it be inconsistent with his honor or dignity, as King, to come again to "see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied"? What humiliation will it be to Christ to see "all kings fall down before him and all nations serve him"? How can his majesty be dimmed by coming in his own glory and that of the Father, with his mighty angels and all the departed saints? How can it be unbecoming our Redeemer to commission his angels to imprison Satan in the abyss? And who can suppose that the

destruction of the civil and ecclesiastical despots, the enemies of Christ and men, will take away from the glory of God in flesh? And will it be any ground of humiliation to Christ to create new heavens and a new earth, in which the righteous shall dwell? Why should it be thought a thing incredible that Christ shall triumph on the earth which he, the Eternal Word, created and upholds, and where he shed his blood for man's redemption? Must Satan, after all, obtain the victory, and this world never be reunited to the holy empire of God? And why should not our Saviour come to accomplish such a glorious and beneficent purpose?

IV. Those who differ from us on this topic also say, When Christ comes again, he will come only for judgment, and that at the end of the thousand years. But if the vision in Rev. 20 : 11-15 describes a literal resurrection and judgment, as we also fully believe, then the vision in Rev. 20 : 4-6 likewise describes a literal resurrection and judgment. But is the judgment, in both visions, of the same kind? Is there no difference between having "judgment given them," and in consequence thereof "sitting on thrones," and being "cast into the lake of fire"? The truth is, the judgment mentioned in one vision relates to the administration or government of the world by the risen saints under Christ, and in the other, to the trial and condemnation of all the unholy dead of all past ages. The expressions, "judge" and "judgment" are used in Scripture, not only to denote judicial process and its results, but also rule, administration, or government. "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us." (Isa. 33 : 22.) "Make us a *king to judge*

us like all the nations." "We will have a king over us, . . . that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles." (1 Sam. 8 : 5, 20.) "O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt JUDGE the peoples righteously, and GOVERN the nations upon the earth." (Ps. 67 : 4. See also Jud. 2 : 16. 1 Ki. 3 : 9; Ps. 2 : 10; 72 : 2-4; Prov. 8 : 16; 20 : 8; Isa. 9 : 7; Jer. 23 : 5.) The day of judgment, then, is the day of the manifestation of the righteous judgment of God; the day of Christ's government over mankind on earth, embracing the whole period denoted by the thousand years. It begins with the destruction of the beast, false prophet, and all anti-christian powers, the binding and confinement of Satan and his angels in the abyss, and the judgment of the living nations; it ends with the resurrection and judgment of the unholy dead and the imprisonment of all the evil angels in hell forever. During this period, the risen and glorified saints reign with Christ on earth, and the surviving sanctified nations adore and obey the Redeemer.

V. Postmillenarians (or at least some of them) affirm that the doctrine of the premillennial advent leads to fanaticism. But is not this doctrine taught in Scripture as before shown? Can it, then, when rightly understood, have such a tendency? *Is it fanaticism, or a fondness for wild opinions, to believe and expect what the prophets and apostles have written?* The perversion and abuse of any scriptural doctrine will unquestionably lead to disastrous results; and what scriptural doctrine has not been perverted and abused? Must we, then, fling the Bible to the winds, and believe only what we can see, hear, feel, smell, and taste, or what others may

please to tell us? Must we reject a plainly revealed fact because some sincere but sanguine men have spent much time in fruitlessly endeavoring to settle the year, or day and year, of Christ's appearing? This the Father hath reserved to himself; and it is not for us to attain such knowledge. But does it follow from this that we can gain no knowledge of the great epochs of prophecy; can not discover, for instance, whether Christ will come before or after the millennium; whether at the destruction of the fourth beast, in its last state, as described by Daniel, or not? Are such epochs darkly adumbrated? Just the contrary is the truth.

*If "fanaticism" be "enthusiasm inflamed by hatred,"* men should be careful how they handle such thunderbolts, and at whose heads they hurl them, lest, perhaps, they make those sad whose hearts tremble at the word of God, and whom he himself would have to be comforted. Christian men like Mede, Bickersteth, Judge Joel Jones, Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Newton, and others were no fanatics, but clear-headed, warm-hearted men; they did not consider themselves inspired, but believed the Word of God to be so; and they were premillenarians; founding their belief, not on Judaic or Rabbinic opinions, but on the clear testimony of the Holy Spirit contained in the Prophetic Scriptures.

The Anabaptists of the sixteenth century perverted and abused the doctrine concerning the millennium. They finally took up arms to establish what they foolishly called the kingdom of the saints; that is, to gain political supremacy for themselves. They were enthusiasts, because, without evidence, they considered

themselves inspired ; they were also inflamed by hatred to men, and met with the retribution they deserved. They had not patience to wait for the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, and, in blind infatuation, attempted to put the sceptre in their own hands. But what have the dreams and moral insanity of such men to do with the *scriptural doctrine of the millennium* ? That teaches us that Christ himself will come ; that the risen and glorified saints will reign with him, and govern the world in righteousness ; not that poor, sinful men will do so. And *the doctrine of the millennium as advocated by these Anabaptists* was justly rejected by the Reformers ; as is evident from the following article of the Augsburg Confession, giving the view of the Lutheran churches : “ They condemn others also, who now spread abroad Jewish opinions, that, *before the resurrection of the dead*, the pious shall get the sovereignty in the world, and the wicked be everywhere overthrown.” (“*Damnant et alios, qui nunc spargunt judaicas, quod ante resurrectionem mortuum pii regnum mundi occupaturi sint, ubique oppressis impiis.*”) The Latter Helvetic Confession gives the views of the Reformed churches, as distinguished from the Lutheran ; but in this respect there is no difference of belief : “ Moreover, we condemn the Jewish dreams, that *before the judgment* there shall be a golden age on earth, and that the godly shall possess the kingdoms of the world, their wicked enemies being trodden under foot ; for the evangelical truth, Matthew 24 and 25, and Luke 21, and the apostolic doctrine in the Second Epistle to Timothy 3 and 4, are found to teach far otherwise.” These Protestant



churches, then, of the sixteenth century (and they were not fanatical) held that the saints were not to reign on earth until the resurrection and judgment, or not before the second coming of the Redeemer; but this, if it means any thing, implies that *then* they should so reign.

VI. But it is objected that the millenarian doctrine is not taught in the *Belgic Confession*, and is inconsistent with its last article. We deny the alleged inconsistency.

And, first, let us inquire as to *what is positively taught therein*. It begins thus: "Finally, we believe, according to the Word of God, when the time appointed by the Lord (which is unknown to all creatures) is come, and the number of the elect complete, that our Lord Jesus Christ will come from heaven, corporally and visibly, as he ascended, with great glory and majesty, to declare himself judge of the quick and the dead; burning this old world with fire and flame, to cleanse it." In this paragraph *the certainty of our Lord's visible, glorious, and personal return to the world* is declared, and all millenarians, as well as others, believe it. *The exact season* of his return, the day and hour of it, is known to God alone; and so we believe. *The completeness of the number of the elect* spoken of refers, in our judgment, to the gathering of an elect Church out of the nations by the preaching of the Gospel during this dispensation, and by his word written or spoken in former dispensations. This is clearly revealed in Scripture, and we hold it to be true on the divine testimony. *For what purpose* will Christ come? "To declare himself judge of the living and the dead." We believe it, taking the word "judge" in its compre-

hensive Biblical signification, as we have a perfect right to do, inasmuch as the expression, "judge of the quick and the dead" is altogether scriptural. Besides, even if the word judge in this article be explained according to modern usage, an affirmation that Christ will come as judge is not a denial that he will come as king. Our Lord will also come "to cleanse this old world" by "burning it with fire and flame." Now, to cleanse the earth is not to destroy it as a habitable globe, but to prepare it as the palace of our Lord, and the home of his redeemed.

"And then all men will personally appear before this great Judge, both men and women and children, that have been from the beginning of the world to the end thereof," (or all that have existed on earth from Adam up to Christ's coming,) "being summoned by the voice of the archangel, and by the sound of the trumpet of God. For all the dead shall be raised out of the earth, and their souls joined and united with their proper bodies, in which they formerly lived. As for those who shall then be living, they shall not die as the others, but be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and from corruptible, become incorruptible. Then the books (that is to say, the consciences) shall be opened, and the dead judged according to what they shall have done in this world, whether it be good or evil. Nay, all men shall give account of every idle word they have spoken, which the world only counts amusement and jest; and then the secrets and hypocrisy of men shall be disclosed and laid open before all."

That those who have died from Adam up to our Lord's second coming, shall, without exception, be

raised again, and appear before Christ as judge, after he has arrived in our world, we fully believe; as also that the judgment will be perfectly impartial, and extend to thoughts, motives, words, and deeds, both good and evil. Moreover, that the saints who are living when the Saviour comes shall be changed from mortal to immortal in an instant, we undoubtedly receive. (1 Cor. 15.)

“And therefore the consideration of this judgment,” etc. Here there is nothing to which our intellect does not assent, and our heart consent; for we believe that, at the personal coming of our Lord, will be that great day in which his people shall obtain complete deliverance from all evils; and that the open and avowed enemies of Christ, and the persecutors of his saints then living, as well as all the impenitent and unbelieving dead of this and preceding dispensations, will, at the same era, and in their complete nature, receive their full punishment. We also certainly “*expect that great day with a most ardent desire*, to the end that we may fully enjoy the promises of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

Secondly, permit us briefly to state what is *not* taught in this article of our Confession:

1. Not a word is said in it of our Saviour's return to heaven with his saints, after his personal coming to our world. This, then, is an open question.

2. Not a word, phrase, or sentence in it can be fairly interpreted of the utter destruction of the earth at his coming; on the contrary, its cleansing, or renovation, is affirmed.

3. The reign of Christ on earth with the risen and

glorified saints, is not denied in it. An omission or silence is not a denial ; neither is it an affirmation ; and what is so omitted is left undecided by the Confession.

4. Not an expression, clause, period, or paragraph does it contain which affirms that the resurrection and judgment of the righteous and the wicked will be exactly simultaneous. Whether or not, a thousand years will intervene between the two great events, it leaves undecided. "*Then* all men will personally appear," etc., is the language employed ; that is, at Christ's coming, some time after he has arrived, or in that day.

5. Nothing is declared in it as to the question, whether or not, the human race will increase and be perpetuated on earth after Christ's second advent. That is a matter which may be examined and decided by the divine testimony, as given in Scripture.

6. Not a word is said in it as to the topic whether our Redeemer will come before or after the conversion of the nations, which is another open question, to be decided by Scripture alone.

Since these things are so, where is the inconsistency of the millenarian doctrine with this article of our Confession ? Nowhere, as we proceed to show. An objector to our view thus writes :

1. "Millenarianism holds two resurrections, separated by a thousand years. The Confession speaks only of one, '*For all the dead shall be raised,*' " etc. Here, however, the Confession simply *affirms* that the resurrection will be *universal*, which all believe.

*What the Confession neither affirms nor denies, is an open question ;* but the Confession neither affirms nor denies two resurrections ; that matter, therefore, is an open question.

Again, the Confession neither affirms nor denies that there will be an interval of a thousand years between the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked; that matter, therefore, is an open question.

2. But the objector says: "Millenarianism holds that the nations are to be converted after our Lord's second advent. The Confession says that the advent shall take place when 'the number of the elect is complete.' Of course, if any are converted afterward, they are not of the elect."

That the nations will be converted after Christ's advent, is neither affirmed nor denied by the Confession; that topic, therefore, is an open question.

The elect spoken of in the Confession are those chosen of God in Christ unto salvation, who existed from Adam up to our Lord's return to earth, or all the saints of this and preceding dispensations. (See Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 54.) When Christ comes, the number of this elect Church, or his departed saints, will be complete; and they will be brought with him to the earth. (1 Thess. 3 : 13.) But other saints will then be living on the earth. Now, we ask, will those saints then living be "of the elect," or of those predestinated to salvation? Who doubts it? And if the nations are to be converted at Christ's coming, as is revealed in the seventh chapter of Daniel, who will say that they have not also been appointed of God to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ?

Permit us also to ask, *For what great purpose* is the elect Church gathered out of the nations, from Adam up to our Lord's advent? Let the answer be given by the elect themselves, now in heaven, in their hymn of



adoration and gratitude addressed to the Redeemer: "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood *out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation*; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: AND WE SHALL REIGN ON THE EARTH." (Rev. 5.)

3. The increase and perpetuation of the race on earth after our Lord's coming, is neither affirmed nor denied in the Confession, and is, therefore, an open question.

4. "Millenarians," we are told, "have much to say of Christ's prolonged personal reign on earth. The Confession has not a word on the subject."

We reply as before: The personal reign of Christ on earth is neither affirmed nor denied in the Confession, and is, therefore, an open question.

Further: "Indeed, if only it can be shown that there is but one real, literal resurrection, the entire theory is exploded." We answer, it does not follow; for there will remain to be set aside the scriptural proofs for the premillennial advent and personal reign of Christ, to say nothing of subordinate topics. But it can never be shown that there will be but one literal resurrection, or that the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked will be exactly simultaneous; and that for two reasons; first, because postmillenarians themselves contend that the resurrection spoken of in Rev. 20: 11-15, is a literal one; and if so, then the resurrection mentioned in the former vision must be literal also; secondly, because we have the explanation of Rev. 20: 4, given by the Holy Spirit in the two following verses, "*This is the first resurrection*," etc. Now, the first resurrection is of the holy, but the second of the unholy, or of those who will be "cast into the lake of fire."

J. T. D.

## ESSAY V.

### POSTMILLENARIANISM A NOVELTY.

THE difference between Premillenarianism and Postmillenarianism is thus graphically set forth in a work published in London, 1837, called *The Book of the Denominations*, p. 658 :

“Of millenarians there has never been, properly speaking, a sect. All churches believe in a millennium, and the orthodox faith is in the spiritual reign of Christ for a thousand years, during which period Christianity, having been universally diffused, shall exert all the power of its principles over mankind, and establish an empire of virtue, peace, and happiness, which shall embrace all the nations of the earth. But the fanatical millenarians maintain that Christ will reign personally on the earth, and that the prophecies of the millennium point to a resurrection of martyrs and of all the saints, or of all true believers, to reign with him a thousand years in a visible kingdom before the general resurrection.”

This is a fair presentation of the two phases of Eschatology. The former opinion, however, is very confidently stated to be the ORTHODOX FAITH ; but if we look into the sense of that descriptive phrase, we think it shall be made clear as light, that neither Scripture nor

history will justify the assertion. If orthodoxy mean a faith drawn from the plain teaching of the New Testament, in a form setting forth the creed of the Christian Church in her purest state and from the earliest age of her existence, received for centuries, then we propose to demonstrate, by indubitable proof, that Premillenarianism is entitled to be called the orthodox faith. Unexceptionable testimony to a great historical fact, from the best sources of proof, namely, *Postmillenarians themselves*, shall show that the FIRST THREE HUNDRED YEARS of the Christian era were marked by the universal prevalence of this faith. And we engage either to convince the gainsayer or reduce him to silence, so far as any pertinent reply is concerned.

As this is purely a historical question, our appeal must be to history, as set forth and expounded by Postmillenarian writers, whose honesty and fairness have deservedly given them a high standing in the estimation of the Church, so that their authority must be accepted as final in all matters of this nature.

"In revealed religion," says Mr. Faber, "by the very nature and necessity of things, as Tertullian well teaches us, 'whatever is first, is true; whatever is later, is adulterate.' If a doctrine *totally unknown* to the primitive Church, which received her theology immediately from the hands of the apostles, and which continued long to receive it from the hands of the disciples of the apostles, springs up in a *subsequent* age—let that age be the fifth century, or let it be the tenth century, or let it be the sixteenth century—such doctrine stands on its very front impressed with the brand

of mere *human* invention. Hence, in the language of Tertullian, it is *adulterate*; and hence, with whatever plausibility it may be fetched out of a particular interpretation of Scripture, and with whatever practical piety on the part of its advocates it may be attended, we can not *evidently* admit it to be part or parcel of the divine revelation of Christianity." We presume this will be accepted as a fair method of testing what is truth in historical theology; and with all due deference we submit the following to prove that Premillenarianism is, and of right ought to be esteemed, the ORTHODOX FAITH of the Church:

I. The FATHERS, of the first three centuries, whose works have come down to us but only in part, have clearly avowed or implied that the early Christian faith was premillennial.

1. BARNABAS, A.D. 71. His epistle is taken to be the production of the "fellow-laborer of Paul," spoken of in Acts 13 : 2, by the fathers and early writers of the Church. If they were correct, then it would seem that the antiquity and apostolicity of our doctrine is settled on a strong historical basis from the beginning, as will be seen by a quotation presently presented; but whether right or wrong, all critics are agreed upon the fact, that this epistle is of a very early period. (KITTO, CYC. art. BARNABAS. GRESSWELL on the Parables, vol. i. p. 344.)

2. CLEMENT OF ROME, A.D. 96. This father does not professedly discuss the subject in question; but the following quotations are in keeping with the belief that he must have been of the opinion of Barnabas; for thus he incidentally makes it known:

"The promise of Christ is great and wonderful, even the rest of the kingdom that is to come, and of eternal life." (2d Ep. 3 : 3.)

"If, therefore, we shall do what is just in the sight of God, we shall enter into his kingdom, and shall receive the promises ; which neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man. Wherefore let us *every hour expect the kingdom of God in love and righteousness, because we know not the day of God's appearing.*" (Chap. 4 : 14, 15.) Who can help seeing that Clement associates the establishment of a future kingdom with the second coming of Christ? And if he was that other "fellow-laborer" of Paul, referred to in Phil. 4 : 3, as it is believed, our historic basis will be found to have been laid by the apostles themselves, since their immediate successors will form a lucid commentary upon the language of their inspired epistles, teaching the doctrine for which we contend.

3. HERMAS, A.D. 100. He was a cotemporary of Paul, (Rom. 16 : 14,) and wrote a work called The Shepherd, which was highly esteemed by the early fathers. (HORNE'S Intro.)

In the first vision (v. 29) there is a trace of the millennium sufficient to show that the author's opinion on that subject is in harmony with our quotations from the fathers who professedly wrote upon it; but not a word to the contrary.

4. IGNATIUS, A.D. 100. He was Bishop of Antioch, and, if Eusebius be right, the successor of the Apostle Peter, in that city. He was cotemporary with Polycarp, Papias, and Irenæus. To the Ephesians



he thus wrote : "The last times are come upon us ; let us, therefore, be very reverent and fear the long-suffering of God, that it be not to us unto condemnation." (Ch. 3 : 5.) To Polycarp : "Be every day better than another ; consider the times, and *expect him* who is above all time, eternal, invisible, though for our sakes made visible." (Ch. 1 : 1.) Not a word of any millennium before the coming of Christ, whom he exhorted Polycarp to expect ; nor could he have indulged any such fancy as a *spiritual* reign of Him "for our sakes made visible," since he thought that the last times might probably end with his own generation.

5. POLYCARP, A.D. 108. He was the disciple and companion of the Apostle John. We have only one of his Epistles, in which he says nothing for or against the doctrine in question ; but that he was of the opinion of his cotemporaries, and of his fellow-student and intimate friend Papias, also instructed by that apostle, is rendered highly probable, if not certain, by the declarations of Papias relative to his own researches as to the apostles' doctrines and their reported colloquial teachings.

6. PAPIAS, A.D. 116. He was a pupil of the Apostle John. He wrote *specifically* of the millennium, and recorded the common belief of the Church down to his own day on that subject. His testimony was extended through five volumes of a work called "An Exposition of the Words of the Lord ;" of which, though lost, some account is given by early ecclesiastical historians.

WHITBY says, that this father taught in reference

to the *second coming* of Christ, "It shall be a reign of Christ bodily on the earth."

GIESELER says, that "to the school of PAUL belong *Barnabas, Clement of Rome, and Hermas*. The disciples of JOHN are *Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch; Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna; and Papias, Bishop of Hieropolis*, of whose writings nothing but fragments are extant."

BARNABAS, whom we first mentioned, speaks for the school of Paul. He says: "In six thousand years the Lord God will bring all things to an end. For with him one day is a thousand years, as himself testifieth, saying, Behold, this day shall be a thousand years. Therefore, children, in six days (of a thousand years each) shall all things be accomplished. And what is this that he saith, 'And he rested on the seventh day'? He meaneth this, that when *his Son shall come, and abolish the season of the wicked one, and judge the ungodly, and shall change the sun, moon, and stars, then he shall gloriously rest on that seventh day.*"

Who does not see that Barnabas teaches that the coming of Christ will be *premillennial*? It is impossible to deny it, and at the same time to be sane and honest. To make the matter doubly sure, we quote a few more verses of the context: "Behold, therefore, he will then truly sanctify it with blessed rest, (that is, the thousand years' Sabbath, or millennium,) when we, *having received the righteous promise, when iniquity shall be no more, all things being renewed by the Lord*, shall be able to sanctify it, being ourselves first made holy." "It is therefore fitting, that learning the just commands of the Lord, which we have before mentioned, we should walk in them. For he who does such

things shall be glorified in the kingdom of God. But he that chooseth the other part shall be destroyed, together with his works. *For this cause there shall be both a resurrection and a retribution.*" "For the day is at hand in which all things shall be destroyed, together with the wicked one. The Lord is near, and his reward is with him." Such is the testimony of Barnabas.

PAPIAS speaks for the school of John. He was a premillenarian of such positive precision in statement, that Origen and his disciples, of whom *Eusebius* was one, could not pervert or evade his meaning. Therefore, with a view to reduce an influence that could not be destroyed, Eusebius ungenerously impeached the capabilities of Papias; but in this he betrayed such inconsistency of statement, that his *adverse* judgment in one place, produced by his Origenism, offset by his *favorable* judgment in another, extorted by cautious regard for his own credit as a historian, completely exposes him as a time-server, and a calculating partisan. He says, in b. iii. c. 36 of his history:

"At this time, also, Papias was well known as bishop of the Church at Hieropolis, *a man well skilled in all manner of learning, and well acquainted with the Scriptures.*" We judge this to be true, mainly from the fact that he was chosen to be bishop of the important charge committed to his trust, and maintained his reputation undiminished to the last moment of his life. He nobly died a martyr of the Lord, but his influence long lived after him; and the veneration for his principles and his name, in the early Church, is acknowledged by Eusebius himself, as we shall show.

Of the writings of this father and martyr, Irenæus

says: "These things are attested by Papias, *who was John's hearer, and the associate of Polycarp*, an ancient writer, who mentions them in his fourth book." But because Eusebius was an Origenist, and likely forgetting what he had already written in commendation of Papias, he thus speaks of him in b. iii. c. 39: "The same historian also gives other accounts, which he says he adds as received by him from unwritten tradition, likewise certain strange parables of our Lord and of his doctrine, and some other matters rather too fabulous. In these he says there would be a certain millennium after the resurrection, and that there would be a corporeal reign of Christ on this very earth; which things he appears to have imagined, as if they were authorized by the apostolic narrations, not understanding correctly those matters which they propounded mystically in their representations. For he was very limited in his comprehension, as is evident from his discourses. *Yet he was the cause why* MOST OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL WRITERS URGING THE ANTIQUITY OF THE MAN, WERE CARRIED AWAY BY A SIMILAR OPINION." This is what Eusebius says about Papias. (Crusé's translation.)

The arrogance of this writer is clear from his attempt to involve "most of the ecclesiastical writers," to whom he was indebted for his facts, in the same condemnation; for if Papias really had the intellectual character here imputed to him, all the historians alluded to must have been weaklings also, since they did not discover the imbecility of this father, "well skilled in all manner of learning," or if they did, must have supposed that antiquity sanctifies folly.

7. JUSTIN MARTYR, A.D. 150. He was a cotem-

porary of Polycarp and Papias, but so far as appears from his writings, was acquainted with neither. He is a witness who testifies more explicitly than they on this subject, though he was not indebted to them for his information. Having been a man of some note as a scholar, and a Platonic philosopher, his position was far above theirs intellectually, according to public estimation. His conversion to Christianity was, therefore, a great gain to the cause. This celebrated writer says, in his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew :

“I, and whatsoever Christians are orthodox, do know that there will be a resurrection of the flesh, and a thousand years in the city of Jerusalem, built, adorned, and enlarged according to the prophets.”

SEMISCH, in his life and times of Justin, concedes that “Chiliasm constituted in the second century so decidedly an article of faith, that Justin held it up as a *criterion of perfect orthodoxy*.” And let it be remembered that it did not become *heresy* by being put under the ban of Romanism, when that apostasy became triumphant over the faith of the early Church.

8. IRENÆUS, A.D. 178, taught the same doctrine very explicitly, in his fifth book against Heresies. Speaking of it, he says :

“The aforesaid blessing, therefore, doubtless appertains to the times of the kingdom, when the just shall rise from the dead, and reign ; when the creature also being made new and freed, shall produce an abundance of food ‘of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth ;’ according as the Elders who saw John the disciple of the Lord, have mentioned that they them-



selves have heard of him, after what manner the Lord was wont to teach concerning those times."

Of the two last-named fathers, Chillingworth says: "They held the doctrine of the millenaries as a matter of faith; and though *Justin deny it*, yet you, I hope, will affirm that *some* good Christians held the contrary." Chillingworth, therefore, admits the fact of Justin's denial that *any good Christian held the contrary!*

9. TERTULLIAN, A.D. 200. A celebrated man, who worthily exerted a great influence in the early Church. In his book against Marcion, he wrote:

"We do indeed confess that a kingdom is promised us on earth, before that in heaven, but in another state, namely, after the resurrection, for it will be one thousand years in a city of divine workmanship. This is the city provided of God to receive the saints in the resurrection, wherein to refresh them with an abundance of spiritual good things, in recompense for those which in the world we have either despised or lost."

10. CYPRIAN, A.D. 250, was Bishop of Carthage, and, according to Mede, a decided millenarian.

11. NEPOS, A.D. 262. He was an Egyptian bishop, and wrote against those who perverted the Scriptures by philosophical speculations, and excessive allegorizing.

12. LACTANTIUS, A.D. 300. An eminent divine and an elegant Latin scholar. He wrote extensively and more fully on this subject than any of the fathers. Take this extract:

"Let the philosophers, therefore, who reckon up thousands of ages from the beginning of the world, understand that the sum total has not yet reached the

six thousand years; and when that number is complete an end must be made of the present state of things, and the condition of humanity be moulded anew for the better. . . . As then all the works of God were finished in six days, the world must continue in its present state through six ages, that is, six thousand years. And again, as when his works were finished, he rested on the seventh day and blessed it, it follows that upon the end of the six thousandth year, all evil and wickedness must be wiped away from the earth, and justice reign for a thousand years, and the world enjoy a calm and repose from the labors it has now so long endured. . . . And as man was then created mortal and imperfect, of the dust of the earth, to live a thousand years in this world, so is he now formed for perfection of this earthly state of being, that being made alive by God, he may rule in this same world a thousand years."

13. VICTORINUS, A.D. 303-313, Bishop of Pettaw, was known as an advocate of this doctrine; but we can not afford more room for quotations. All these were representative men, champions for the truth against Pagans and Heretics; and many of them sealed their testimony with their blood. They were honest, truthful men, and their testimony as to matters of fact is final.

Now we affirm that not a *single one* of the apostolic fathers can be quoted *against* premillenarianism, while the evidence is accumulative that they all believed it to be in agreement with the Scriptures. We submit this as the first unmanageable part of our historical argument.

II. ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORIANS. The earliest of these is,

1. EUSEBIUS. He is forced to admit that "most of the ecclesiastical historians previous to his day were of the opinion of Papias." Because, swayed by the mysticism of Origen, he endeavored to lower the authority of Papias, by denying that he was a disciple of the Apostle John, asserting that another John was meant, contrary to the declaration of his fellow-pupil Ignatius. In his *Chronicon*, he unhesitatingly allows Papias to have been a disciple of that apostle; but in his *Ecclesiastical History*, he declares that he was the pupil of a certain presbyter, John! The motive is so transparent that, while we accept the *facts* of Eusebius, we must reject his perverse inferences.

2. GIESELER says that "millenarianism became the general belief of the time, and met with almost no other opposition than that given by the Gnostics." (*Ch. Hist.* vol. i. p. 166.)

3. MUNCHER says: "How widely the doctrine of millenarianism prevailed in the first three centuries of Christianity, appears from this, *that it was universally received by almost all teachers.*" (Vol. ii. p. 415.)

4. MOSHEIM says: It is certain that in the second century the opinion that Christ would reign a thousand years on the earth was diffused over a great part of Christendom, and that the most eminent doctors favored it; and no controversy was moved with them by those who thought otherwise. *Tertullian* speaks of it as *the common doctrine of the Church*. "He had written a book expressly on the subject, entitled *De Spe Fidelium.*" (*Hist. First Three Cent.* vol. ii. p. 246.) "In

this century (third) the millenarian doctrine fell into disrepute, through the influence especially of Origen, who opposed it because it contravened some of his opinions." (Eccl. History, vol. i. p. 225.)

5. KITTO'S ENCYCLOPEDIA, art. Millennium: "This doctrine may be regarded as generally prevalent in the second century. Origen in the *third* century was the *first* who wrote in opposition to it."

6. GELASIUS, in his *Historia Actorum Concilii Nicensi*—a council assembled by Constantine the Great, A.D. 325, for settling all questions touching the faith and discipline of the Church, composed of 318 bishops from all parts—records the fact that on the resurrection state the Council says: "We expect new heavens and a new earth, according to the Holy Scriptures, at the appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. And then, as Daniel says, 'the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom,' and there shall be a pure earth, holy, a 'land of the living, and not of the dead,' which David foreseeing by the eye of faith exclaims, 'I believe to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living'—the land of the meek and humble. Christ says, 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth;' and the prophet says, 'The feet of the meek and humble shall tread upon it.'"

This is the testimony of the Nicene Council to Millenarianism in the year 325 of the Christian era.

III. OTHER POSTMILLENARIAN AUTHORS. Anxious to give only such authority as will pass current with our brethren on the opposite side, and plenty of it, we avoid all millenarian writers; and now present the opinions of professors and authors, who are candid enough to grant

us all we ask to complete our proof, that this Postmillenarian opinion is a NOVELTY in the Church, and derogatory to her primitive faith.

1. DR. BURTON, Prof. Ch. Hist., Oxford, says, Bampton Lecture for 1829: "*It can not be denied* that Papias, Justin, Irenæus, and all the other ecclesiastical writers, believed, literally, that the saints would rise in the first resurrection, and reign with Christ upon earth, previous to the general resurrection." "Upon the whole, we may safely conclude that *after* the middle of the third century, the doctrine was not received as that of the Catholic Church;" that is, after Origen arose against it.

2. BISHOP RUSSELL, Prof. Eccl. History of the Scottish Episcopal Church, another postmillenarian, says, on p. 84 of his book, that "*down to the beginning of the fourth century, the sure and certain hope entertained by the Christian world, that the Redeemer would APPEAR ON EARTH, AND EXERCISE AUTHORITY DURING A THOUSAND YEARS, WAS UNIVERSAL AND UNDISPUTED.*"

3. GIBBON is not properly included in our list, yet we quote him because he is an eminent historian, always reliable as to *fact*, and therefore an allowable evidence. He says, (Decline and Fall, i. p. 411:) "The assurance of such a millennium was carefully inculcated by a succession of fathers from Justin Martyr and Irenæus, who conversed with the immediate disciples of the apostles, down to Lactantius, who was preceptor to the son of Constantine. Though it might not have been universally received, it appears to have been the reigning sentiment of orthodox believers."

4. CHILLINGWORTH. This celebrated logician, although an anti-millenarian, in arguing down the Pa-



pists, constructed unanswerable syllogisms for our side of this question as follows :

“That this doctrine (of Christ’s personal reign) was by the Church of the next age after the apostles held true and catholic, I prove by these two reasons : First, whatever doctrine is believed and taught by the most eminent fathers of any age of the Church, and by none of their cotemporaries opposed or condemned, that is to be esteemed the catholic doctrine of the Church of those times ; but *the doctrine of the millenaries was believed and taught by the most eminent fathers of the age next after the apostles, and by none of that age opposed or condemned ;* THEREFORE IT WAS THE CATHOLIC DOCTRINE OF THOSE TIMES. Second, whatever doctrine is taught by the fathers of any age, not as doctors, but as *witnesses* of the tradition of the Church, (that is, not as their own *opinion*, but as the *doctrine* of the Church of their times,) that is undoubtedly to be so esteemed, especially if none contradict them in it ; but the fathers above cited teach this doctrine, not as their own private opinion, but as the *Christian tradition, and as the doctrine of the Church, neither did any contradict them in it ;* ergo, IT IS UNDOUBTEDLY TO BE SO ESTEEMED.” (See works, pp. 730, 731, Phil., by Rev. R. Davis.)

Will our brethren try what can be done with this brace of syllogisms ? The logic appears irrefutable, and if so, this system we oppose, is clearly a NOVELTY in the Church, and the offspring of heterodoxy. Can no one, by refutation, come to the rescue ?

5. DR. WHITBY. He flourished near the close of the seventeenth century, and is *the author of modern post-*

*millenarianism*, which, from the time of its success as a theory, is only about *one hundred and fifty years old!!*

He says, in his work on the Millennium, chap. i. sec. 1, speaking of the testimony of the fathers: "Here, then, we may evidently discern three sorts of men: 1. The *heretics*, denying the resurrection of the flesh, and the millennium. 2. The EXACTLY ORTHODOX, asserting both the resurrection and the kingdom of Christ upon earth. 3. The believers who consented with the just, and yet endeavored to allegorize and turn into metaphor all those Scriptures he (Justin Martyr) had produced for a proper reign of Christ, and who had sentiments *rather agreeing with those heretics who denied*, than those *exactly orthodox who maintained this reign of Christ on earth.*" Whitby has given the above as almost the translation of the words of Justin, with a view to exclude certain criticisms of Daillé and Mede upon the original text of Justin; but the Doctor did not reflect upon their import; like a two-edged sword, they cut both ways.

We array these great authorities against DR. SHEDD, who, in his valiant assault upon millenarians in his late work, called "The History of Doctrines," ventured upon allegations so utterly incorrect, that we are necessitated to prove how completely his prejudices have warped his judgment, and put in jeopardy the reputation of his work, as in all respects reliable.

MOSHEIM says, under the third century, "that this opinion, (Christ's personal reign,) which had hitherto met with no opposition," began to decline principally through the influence and authority of Origen, who opposed it with the greatest warmth, because it was

incompatible with some of his favorite sentiments. Origen was a restorationist, and contended for universal salvation not only, but held that it might very well be a fact that the devil and his angels should ultimately be restored. He invented a system of *spiritualizing* the Scriptures, whose wretched influence has proved that it would have been better for the Church if Origen had never lived. His allegorical *spiritualizing* method of exegesis enabled him to make out of the Scriptures whatever he pleased, and it is noteworthy how ingenuously he confessed that millenarianism could not be overthrown but by his new system! "He reckons it a great excellence of *tropology* that the defenders of a millennial kingdom *can not be confuted in any other manner.*" (Opp. tom. iii. p. 826, as referred to by Mosheim.)

But who was ORIGEN? He was the Principal of the celebrated school of Alexandria, a catechist, and a presbyter. A man of great learning, whose reputation and influence extended throughout the then Christian world. He flourished in the first part of the third century. Whatever he might have accomplished in favor of the Christian religion, it is certain he was the occasion of incalculable harm by the doctrines he disseminated, and the practices he inculcated. He believed in the preëxistence of souls, and their imprisonment in bodies for their offenses in a former state of being; in the preëxistence of the soul of Christ; in a spiritual and not a real resurrection of the body; and in the final and total restoration of all men and fallen angels as well. Besides, he laid the foundation of Monksery.

But the great evil that issued from his teaching and

influence, was the method of interpretation he succeeded in imposing upon the Church, of which, if he was not the absolute author, he certainly was the improver; for his genius brought it into shape, so as to be called its father. This mode of interpretation utterly disgraced the Scriptures, which it turned into allegory. "Origen," says McClelland, "denied even the literal truth of history, contending that its whole and only meaning was allegorical. Thus he pronounced it absolutely absurd to suppose the world was created in six days; the creation signified the renovation of the soul by the Gospel, and the six days intimate that it is carried on by degrees."

By such a man were the early millenarians assailed, and by such arguments was this faith put down under the gathering auspicious darkness that covered the middle ages; and he is now honored by some of our Postmillenarians as "the Father of Biblical Literature." Thus Dr. Hatfield: "To Origen of Alexandria must be attributed the credit of being the father of Biblical interpretation. It was under his instruction, or influence, that the Church began in the third century effectually to discard the literalism of Judaism, and fully to apprehend the true spiritual meaning of God's word"!!! (See Amer. and Theo. Review, new series, vol. ii. April, 1864.)

The whole weight of Popery was employed to crush the ancient faith for obvious reasons, and was successful; but when the Reformation rescued the Bible, and opened it to the world, millenarianism again sprang into notice, yet did not regain the prominent place it held for the first three hundred years. But although

it became the subject of various and conflicting opinions, the millennium was never made to *antedate* the literal coming of Christ. The prevailing opinion that *the world would end at the close of the six thousand years*, continued to be received undisputed, down to the time of DANIEL WHITBY. He devised a new theory, substantially a modified Origenism, placing the literal coming of Christ *after* the millennium, and making that period to be what he called the *spiritual kingdom* of the Redeemer. To this view, which is the prevailing one of the present day, is given the name of POSTMILLENNIAL, the credit of whose invention Whitby justly claims in the preface to his work on this subject. He says, speaking of his original thought: "This naturally led me to a discourse of the millennium, *which being framed according to THIS NEW HYPOTHESIS*, I shall now offer it for the consideration of the learned." Instead of a *thesis*, he called his scheme an *hypothesis*, or a conjecture; and strange enough is the fact that it has obtained such favor in the Church of our day, that it is now held no longer an hypothesis, but "the orthodox faith," according to the writer we have first quoted!

These are all antimillenarian authorities, who, it is fair to suppose, are guilty of no exaggeration; who admit nothing that they could deny with due regard to historic truth. Their labored efforts to explain away the thing proved by the facts in the case, their prejudices cropping out here and there, together with the quiet innuendoes in which they indulge, go far to show that they are reluctant witnesses. As a question of pure history, we think no one can conveniently get around this mass of the best evidence that can be giv-



en—that of enemies. We might pile up more, but surely more is needless, and we must be brief. If there be any such thing as historical demonstration, we claim that our position is entitled to that degree of evidence; and however it may be assailed, it can not be overthrown, without first demolishing the bulwarks of Church history. By the claims of Whitby, never contradicted that we are aware of, but justified by his book on the Millennium, he is the author of the present prevailing opinion, so long accepted; and as this is about one hundred and fifty years old, we submit it as proved, that POSTMILLENARIANISM IS A NOVELTY in the Christian Church.

We think it would be a good specimen of candor, either to refute our authorities or concede the truth of what they establish; one or the other must be done by the demands of common honesty; but our faith, though venerable for antiquity and the universal acceptance of the early Church, is not based on human authority. It is rooted in the Old and New Testaments; and by the naked word of God it must stand as the faith once delivered unto the saints.

#### OBJECTIONS.

Attempts have been made, not to answer the historical argument supporting premillenarianism, but to impair it by certain *objections*, which some would have us believe of weight sufficient to justify their repudiation of the claims it sets up. We must briefly consider them.

*First Objection.* Certain of the fathers were silent on this subject. Thus SEMISCH says, "Life of Jus-

tin," vol. ii. p. 374, in a note: "It is known that neither in the Epistles of the Roman Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp, nor in the apologetic writings of Tatian, Athenagoras, and Theophilus of Antioch, can any trace be found of millenarian opinions."

*Answer.* 1. Some of the writings of these fathers, said to be silent, are *lost*; it is, therefore, altogether fallacious and incorrect to make such a representation.

2. In those portions of their writings which have come down to us not one sentence can be found *opposed* to millenarianism, whilst the cotemporaries of these fathers, as we have shown, vouch for their orthodoxy in *this* particular.

3. Those of the early writers who did not give their opinion on this matter, were occupied in the defenses of other phases of the Christian faith; whereas millenarianism needed no defense, because of its universal prevalence.

4. Their writings, however, by their *drift*, give us strong presumptive grounds to conclude they were all agreed on this article, which Justin makes a *mark of orthodoxy* from the beginning of the New Testament church. All men acknowledge the *honesty, piety, and learning* of Justin.

5. Those of them who do write upon the subject strongly testify for the rest, and we can not reject their testimony.

6. This way of reasoning would completely destroy the historical evidence for infant baptism. The Baptists tell us that not one of the fathers, from the apostles down to Tertullian, ever speak of infant baptism. Therefore, say they, this practice was a popish innova-

tion. In reply, we prove that this practice was so universally recognized as a divine ordinance, and so well understood as among the first principles of Christianity, there was no occasion to speak of it at all, because there were no Baptists to call it in question. Antimillenarians thus successfully meet the watery argument; but when they oppose us on another subject, lo! this despicable logic becomes mighty to the pulling down of strongholds!

*Second Objection.* HERESY! This objection is a scare-crow upon which our opponents count for success far too confidently. Thus Dr. Hatfield tells us, in the "American Presbyterian and Theological Review," vol. ii. new series, April, 1864:

"The first among professedly Christian writers who took this view (Millenarian) of the vision of John was Cerinthus. He seems to have lived at Ephesus at the close of the first century." (P. 209.)

*Answer.* We deny this allegation; and as no proof is offered but the opinion of Augustine, we need only remark that Cerinthus was a noted heretic, and reprobated by all the Church except those of his own party. The testimony of *Justin* is an extinguisher upon this representation. But the essayist continues: "The first chiliast was a Gnostic, a heretic, a man of visionary conceits, disowned and rejected by the fathers of the Church. With him and his immediate disciples it would have probably died, or have been classed in the list of heresies, but for the influence of Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, in Phrygia, in the first part of the second century." This allegation is made without proof, and, we may add, without due regard to

historic accuracy; we therefore can afford to leave it in contrast with the declaration of Bishop Russell, of Scotland, Professor of Church History. He says, "Discourse on the Millennium," p. 39: "With respect to the millennium, *it must be acknowledged* that the doctrine concerning it stretches back into antiquity so remote and obscure that it is impossible to fix its origin." With strange inconsistency Dr. Hatfield says, "That they all (Oriental Christians) looked forward to a millennial period of bliss on earth, then just at hand, to be ushered in by the glorious advent of the Messiah, is clear. Still *it can not be said that chiliasm was the faith of the Church of the first two centuries*. Far from it. It seems to have *originated* in Asia Minor, to have prevailed principally in Phrygia and Mysia, especially in the neighborhood of Hierapolis, Thyatira, and Laodicea, but not much in other parts of the Church." (P. 218.) Yet, on p. 204, he informs us that it *originated* in Judea, and among the disciples of Christ! for he tells us that Christ's "own teachings led them for want of proper discrimination to expect an entirely new dispensation of grace, to be ushered in by the resurrection trump and the final judgment"!! We can not afford more space for the notice of a writer so inaccurate and so *completely contradicted* by the authors of note on his own side of this question, already quoted; but in opposition to his statement we place the declaration of Dr. WHITBY, in his "Treatise on Tradition":

"It (millenarianism) was received not only in the eastern parts of the Church by *Papias*, (in Phrygia,) *Justin*, (in Palestine,) *Irenæus*, (in Gaul,) *Nepos*, (in Egypt,) *Apollinarius*, *Methodius*, (in the West and

South,) *Cyprian*, *Victorinus*, (in Germany,) by *Tertulian*, (in Africa,) *Lactantius*, (in Italy,) and *Severus*, but by the COUNCIL OF NICE." This council, composed of 318 bishops, from all parts of the then Christian world, met A.D. 325. These were all representative men, and their opinions were received with great deference by the masses of Christians of their day. This renders it impossible that the representations of Dr. HATFIELD and Dr. SHEDD, previously referred to, can be correct. It is somewhat remarkable, by the way, that our modern authors, when combating millenarianism, maintain a profound silence in reference to the great men we have quoted; who, though on their own side of this controversy, are manly enough to admit the true facts of history, which is all we want. Can they be so self-conceited as to think their simple affirmations, at best inadequately supported, are enough to nullify the statements of those whom the literary world have long accepted as accomplished scholars and reliable authority on all historical questions? Surely it becomes them to pay some little deference to historiographers and authors whose praise is in all the churches. They assume quite too much when they write as though their authority should set aside that of men whose competency and reputation are, to say the least, equal to their own.

*Third Objection.* "This doctrine is not acknowledged in our confessions of faith."

*Answer.* Neither is it denied. All the confessions of the Reformation period were so framed on the subject of eschatology that such topics as the one just now before us were left *open questions*. Mark this. The



Westminster Assembly of Divines, 1643, that framed the Confession and Catechisms of the Presbyterian Church, may be referred to. Principal Baillie, in one of his letters from that place, and at the time of the Assembly's sessions, wrote as follows, (Letter No. 117:) "*The most of the chief divines here, not only Independents but others, such as Twisse, (the Moderator,) Marshall, Palmer, and many more, are express chiliasts.*" Were all these stanch Calvinists heretics? Archbishop Usher, whose dates we find upon the pages of our Bibles, and whose "Body of Divinity" is an esteemed legacy to the Church, was a millenarian. Was he a heretic? Bishop Newton, Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Newcombe, Charnock, Benson, Toplady, Horsley, the Bonars, Candlish, Chalmers, Robert Hall, McCheyn, Bengel, Dean Alford, Gaussen; the missionaries Bertram, Poor, Barclay, Lowrie; McIlvaine, Henshaw, Tyng; President Hopkins, Lord, Duffield, Breckinridge, and many others we can not now mention, are millenarians. Are they therefore heretics? They lived, and those of them yet on earth are still living in the attitude of "looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ;" and looking for their crowns, because they "love his appearing," and aspire to be found worthy of the first resurrection. They have labored faithfully in word and doctrine, have lived godly in Christ Jesus, and have proved themselves "Israelites in whom there is no guile;" yet, because they believe that theirs is the ancient orthodox faith on this point, they are HERETICS. How precious is abuse when argument fails!

Those who are competent to speak on this subject

know that millenarians, properly so-called, are strongly orthodox on the doctrines of grace; and that the charge thus brought against them is without foundation, and an ungenerous attempt to cast odium upon them, instead of answering their arguments.

W. R. G.

## ESSAY VI.

### THE BLESSED HOPE.

WHAT is the Christian hope? This is a question which many good men answer with much hesitation. When they expatiate upon faith and the matter of faith, they speak with a prompt decision from the Bible and from the heart; and they speak to edification. Precision of points and prominence of thoughts give definiteness to language in answer to the inquiry, What is faith? Others understand them because they understand themselves. But when they come to define the precise object of hope, as set forth in the Scriptures, indistinct views are too often betrayed by incoherency of expression. On the former subject, the drift of discourse is like a shining stream from which light reflects in the distance; on the latter, it is like that stream struggling through fog, whose waters soon seem to commingle with the vapor that hugs both surface and shore.

If it be a fair requisition that we be able to give a reason for the hope that is in us, surely we ought to know precisely what the *matter* of that hope is, according to the Scriptures. It is indeed a brilliant hope, easily spoken of as the sun of our existence; but as we distinguish between the sun and his brilliancy, so should

we be able to say what is the nucleus and what the radiance of our scriptural hope; because we live for the future more than for the present. Our happiness and our home are not amid the associations of a sensuous experience in a world of sin. What we have here as the children of God, whose consciousness of the pulsations of spiritual life prompts each of us to say, "I *know* in whom I have believed," does not come within the sphere of that hope; for what a man possesseth, why doth he yet hope for? but what we shall have hereafter, as the inward, living spring of perpetual bliss, must be its very soul; for if we hope for that we do not possess, then do we with patience wait for it.

The hope of the individual Christian is the hope of the Church, for all are partakers of the same hope. What this is, as the anticipated, ever-unfolding source of our future joy, must be defined by the Word of God. Now, when a Christian is asked, "What is the object of your immortal hope?" the answer in most cases is, *Heaven*. This is indeed according to that Word, but is there not a vagueness in the answer which a discriminating knowledge of the Scriptures will enable us to avoid? We read there of "the hope laid up for us in *heaven*," and this seems to show the insufficiency of such an answer, for our hope and our heaven are as plainly distinguished as a jewel and its casket. If we proceed with our catechising, "What and where is heaven?" shall we not find that a feeling of dismal confusion, a painfully felt sense of *know-nothingness*, causes many Christians to shrink like children entering a dark tunnel? They have been accustomed to regard *heaven* as a locality far beyond the dimmest star re-

vealed by the telescope, and far more obscure than the nebulous matter at the end of its utmost range. Surely our great body of compacted fact and doctrine is in a sorry case if it must be whittled down to a point like this. We think that a more satisfactory conclusion, and one resting upon a more definite basis, may be obtained from the Word of God.

We read of a "lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven." Here again the inheritance, the object of hope, is distinguished from heaven; just as the *contained* is different from the *container*. If not, we can not avoid confusion in the interpretation of this and similar texts. But then the question returns, "What is heaven, and where is heaven?" We reply, Heaven is more of a *state* than a *place*; more of a *condition* descriptive of what we shall be than of a *configuration* representing where we shall be. The word heaven means *expanse*, *boundless space*; sometimes it is used in the singular and sometimes in the plural. Its primitive meaning is *expanse*; and every globe that whirls upon the power of God has its *expanse* of atmosphere of some kind. When we say, with a sacred writer, to the Almighty, "The heaven of heavens can not contain thee," we have thus some precision to our thoughts in the use of such language. Heaven, as a *state* or *condition*, is descriptive of perfect happiness streaming in all directions from perfect holiness. As a *place*, it is any locality where Christ is or shall be—any orb where holiness and happiness reign. Wherever he may be in his Father's house, every departed soul, redeemed



by the blood of the Lamb, is surrounded with the halo of "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," forever free from the impurities of corruption and sin. Hence it follows that Adam, in his unfallen state, was, when in Eden, as much in heaven as was Gabriel in his more elevated sphere; and when he lost his *inheritance* by disobedience, his expulsion from Eden was his ejection from a heavenly state. Therefore, when the curse is all lifted from the earth, and by the process of a physical regeneration this world of ours shall appear once more that beautiful thing that it was when it rolled off from the palm of the creating hand, propelled in its orbit, and on its mission of "showing forth his handiwork," who shall say that it will not be a fitting *place* for the elimination of eternal happiness to the saints in light? "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God BRING with him; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the AIR: and so shall we EVER be with the Lord." *Οὕτω*—in this manner—denoting not simply union, but permanency of state. (Matt. 1: 18; 1 Cor. 7: 7.) According to this text, professedly descriptive of our heavenly condition, they that sleep in Jesus in a certain manner undescribed, are with him now; but when he comes again, they shall be brought back with him, and this congregation of the saints shall be in the air or atmosphere of this world, to be invested with their nobler glories when their coronation shall take place. "They (as well as we) are kept by the power of God, through faith unto *salvation*, READY TO BE REVEALED IN THE LAST TIME."

The apostle says not one word about *returning* to the former manner of existence with the Lord ; but he assures us that in *this manner* they shall ever be with him. Christ is nowhere said to return to the place he came from, after this event ; and nowhere in the Word of God is there assigned the saints a local heaven forever, so unmistakably as in this text.

The inheritance lost by the first Adam will be the inheritance gained by the second. Crowns of glory given to the co-regents with Christ will be the insignia of dominion again to be associated with the divine image impressed upon the soul and body, reunited in the bonds of a blissful immortality. "Holy brethren, partakers of the *heavenly* calling," THIS IS OUR HOPE in the "world to come." "Blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places," "our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven." Therefore we can rejoice in this measure of knowledge : "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet *appear* what we shall be : but we know that when he shall *appear*, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath THIS HOPE in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." "For our citizenship is in heaven ; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ : who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." This is our glorious hope, so sharply defined, so unspeakably grand, that thoughts start tears.

The Apostle Paul brings all his language touching this point, in harmony with what we have already quoted. He gives us a portion of his own experience,

and the method he took to gain the object of his hope. "I count all things," says he, "but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; *if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.*" This then was his great hope, that his earnest efforts would end in attainment unto the resurrection from among the dead. Now all men shall rise from the dead; their efforts in any way can not prevent it or secure it. Surely then Paul's effort was not to gain that which he could not avoid. Arise from the dead he must, *nolens volens*. What then was the great object of his desire and effort? It could not have been a *spiritual* resurrection, for he had long before been made alive in Christ Jesus. It could not have been the *general* resurrection, because he could not have avoided that. It could not have been any thing else but the *FIRST* resurrection at the time of the coming of the Lord. This was the goal at the end of his race, from which he never removed his eye. Our union with Christ, and association with them who shall be brought back with him when he comes, is the *matter* of our hope. And what is the scriptural expression of our hope but "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall confirm us unto the end, that we may be blameless in the day of our

Lord Jesus Christ"? What higher aspiration can we have than this, "that when he shall *appear*, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him *at his coming*," so that "when the chief Shepherd shall appear, we shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." The idea of heaven, with all its bliss, is swallowed up in this magnificent hope. "*When Christ*, who is our life, shall *appear*, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

But we must consult the Scriptures for a *definition* of the Christian Hope. Happily this is found in Titus 2 : 13: "Looking for that *blessed hope*, even THE GLORIOUS APPEARING OF OUR GREAT GOD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST."

Here we have the Hope formally defined. The object or matter of it is the glorious appearing of Christ. "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." In no instance is the abstract idea of *heaven*, as commonly understood—a place of happiness, ease, and joy—associated with the passion of hope, by Christ or his apostles. His own immediate presence is heaven itself, irrespective of place; for the term *heaven* can only be to us a synonym of "joy unspeakable and full of glory." "Our gathering unto him" is our "going to heaven." Without him, there is no heaven for us with him, there is no heaven besides. "In his presence there is fullness of joy;" without his presence there is sorrow for evermore. To be with him and near him and like him, is the grand result of our "*salvation ready to be revealed in the last time*."

The souls of his redeemed after separation by death

go to him immediately ; for "to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." They are, however, only in *Paradise*, which is a synonym of happiness ; and there "they *rest* from their *labors*." In their disembodied state, they can not attain any higher happiness. *Where* this is we can not know ; it is *Hades*, hidden from us. It is not their final abode, nor the full measure of the joys of salvation yet to be revealed, for the dead in Christ are *kept for this* ; the body in *its* Hades, which is the place of its dissolution ; the soul in *its* Hades, which is the place of temporary happiness now unknown to us. But when he shall come the second time, these shall all come with him, to be crowned with the glory of the resurrection in their spiritual bodies, *made like unto his glorious body*. To be with him *then*, is to be in the highest heaven, which is expressive of *condition* rather than of *place*. To be separated from him then, is the "*Anathema Maranatha*" of perdition.

We therefore say that the Christian's Hope has respect to his interest in the Second Advent, and this is made clear as noon by the New Testament. Rom. 8 : 19-25 : "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the *manifestation* of the sons of God. The creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption." What for ? Only to be *burned* up ? No ; but for being ushered "into the glorious liberty of the children of God." If then sinful man and his sin-cursed habitation, now groaning under a common bondage, shall then be made the recipients of a common deliverance, each regenerated and blessed anew, according to their respective natures, is



it not probable that earth, Paradise regained, must then be the abode of man regained, even as earth, Paradise lost, is now the abode of man lost? Paul's words imply this, because the hope of which he speaks includes the physical restoration of the earth, or else he reasons inconclusively; since we know the curse fell upon the earth, and that Christ came to remove *all* the curse and destroy the works of the devil. We then patiently wait for this hope of a common deliverance when a *new heavens and a new earth* shall be "the world to come." This is heaven.

The First Advent of Christ was the pole-star of hope to the Church under the Old Testament, *sacrifices* pointing to him that "was to come." The Second Advent is the pole-star of hope to the New Testament Church, *sacraments* pointing to him "until he come." The prophets under the *old* economy often preach the second advent, without mentioning the first; but never the first, without including the second.\* The apostles

\* In the "American Presbyterian Theological Review," vol. ii. new series, April, 1864, there is an essay upon the Second Advent, by Rev. Dr. Hatfield. He thus writes: "The glowing descriptions of peace, plenty, and prosperity; of the utter overthrow of the combined powers of darkness, and of the glorious and universal triumph of the principles of truth and righteousness which so abound in the Hebrew oracles, had distinct reference, beyond all question, to the first advent." This we deny.

"What the old prophetic seers beheld in these visions, was simply the Messiah coming to inaugurate the new dispensation of the kingdom of grace." This we deny.

"Nothing can be more obvious than that all their Old Testament predictions, relative to Christ and his Church, were originally understood of the first advent." This we deny.

"Aside from the teachings of the New Testament, no one would

under the *new*, refer to the first advent as the only basis of our hope, and to the second as the only matter of our hope. We therefore say that the doctrine of our Lord's Second Advent, as the Hope of the Church, is an essential doctrine of the Gospel, by which we mean that the Gospel is incomplete without it. That preaching which omits this doctrine of Hope is not preaching the whole Gospel, and not only that, but it is ignoring the best part of the good news; and that faith which culminates in a hope of heaven as a mere place of escape into happiness, is very defective; and if such hope work by love, it looks more like the love of selfishness than the love of Christ.

He spoke sparingly to his disciples in private about his own death; but he spoke to all publicly, often, and pungently, about his second advent. It was most prominently set before his followers as the matter of

think, as no one before the ministry of our Lord ever did think, of finding the doctrine of the second advent in the writings of the Old Testament." (Pp. 198, 199.) This we deny.

"The glowing descriptions of peace, plenty, and prosperity," made to the Jews, of course, "had distinctive reference, beyond all question, to the first advent"! Pray, in what respect did the first advent realize these to the Jews? Does Isaiah's "glowing description" of the warrior coming from the slaughter of his enemies, ch. 63, refer to his *first* advent? Does the vision of Daniel of "one like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven," 7 : 13, refer to the *first* advent? Does the descriptive prophecy of Zechariah 14 : 4, respecting him whose "feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem, when the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof," delineate the *first* advent? A multitude of prophetic passages respecting the Redeemer might be quoted of like impracticability of application to the first advent from all parts of the Old Testament.

their hope. His very last utterance made to the high-priest, on his mock trial, was his final announcement of his second advent. From the 13th chapter of Matthew to the 27th, from the 9th of Mark to the 15th, from the 9th of Luke to the 22d, from the 5th of John to the last chapter, in various forms of speech, Christ presents the doctrine of his second advent. He commissioned his apostles to preach the Gospel. What is this? It is the *good news of the kingdom*. And when we examine the Acts and the Epistles, we find that the doctrine of the Second Advent is most prominently set forth in their preaching and writings. Hence we say that a doctrine so frequently urged, and so minutely expounded, both by our Lord and his disciples, must be an essential doctrine of the Gospel, especially since it involves our hope of glory.

It therefore follows that this doctrine can not be omitted in the exposition of the Gospel without mutilating it. Ministers must preach the first advent, the atonement, with all other doctrines connected with the fall and recovery of man in their just proportion; but if they omit the second advent and the scriptural doctrines connected with it, they only preach an incomplete Gospel. He who preaches the first advent of Christ coming for a pattern of virtue, but omits the doctrine of his atoning sacrifice, mutilates the Gospel, because the doctrine of the atonement is fundamental. So, should we preach the first advent of the Saviour coming to suffer, but omit the second advent of Christ coming to reign, we should preach a mutilated Gospel, because of an essential part left out; for this is our *blessed hope, his glorious appearing*.

In the first advent God came as man, for "in him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily." In the second advent man will come as God—"our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." Should we omit to preach the first, we should obscure the unspeakable condescension and mercy of Jehovah; should we neglect the second, we should obscure the greatest glory of redemption, which is man clothed in the glory of God. This is the "salvation of the Lord" in its highest significance, to be revealed when he shall come the second time; and upon this great realization, as the *matter* of our hope, should the *act* and *energy* of it be expended, as an essential feature of true loyalty and love. Hence, "*the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and our gathering together unto him," is Paul's basis of exhortation and instruction and prayer. "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Numerous other passages might be quoted, all going to show how this hope overrode every other aspect of the future, and associated itself with every thing in his mind. Thus should it be with us. Our hope is in the coming of Jesus. The distractions of this present world are on the increase. Never was there an age in which so much religious machinery has been in operation for good; and we rejoice in it as the increase of momentum acquired by the Gospel; but who does not know that every advance in science and every new discovery is turned by the wickedness of the world into an "instrument of unrighteousness unto sin"? After nearly

nineteen centuries of evangelical effort, we venture to say, there is a larger amount of crime crowded into every day of the year, in the midst of gospel-enlightened lands, than at any previous period. The facilities for sin increase with the age of the world, its daily prints being judges. What then? Is the Gospel a failure? No. God says, "My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that whereunto I send it." This is fully met every day, and the work, the great work of the Church, is to ply all her machinery, and intensify her missionary operations, that the Gospel be preached to every creature under heaven, for a witness to the truth, that "none but Christ can do helpless sinners good." And when by this agency he shall have *gathered out of the Gentiles a people for his name*, then shall the end come, when Paul's hope and ours shall be consummated. "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that *love his appearing*." "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!" We "are kept by the power of God through faith unto SALVATION, READY TO BE REVEALED IN THE LAST TIME."

#### OBJECTIONS.

An excellent brother presents in a well-written article, taking some exception to the views above expressed, the following

*Objection.* "The apostle Peter *does* assure us (2 Pet. 3 : 10) that 'the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with



fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be BURNED UP.' In this and other language in which the apostle describes what is then to take place, there is nothing but destruction and desolation. The present beauty, order, and productive qualities of the earth, and all the works that man has reared, are to be destroyed in one vast, universal conflagration. 'The heavens,' by which we suppose our atmosphere is intended, (2 Pet. 3 : 5, 6,) are to share the fate of the same general desolation. There is to be no place for us here. 'We,' says the apostle, 'according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.' This language of the apostle gives us no reason to suppose that the new heavens and new earth which are to be our future abode, are the old structures which have been destroyed, renewed and regenerated. The language rather leads us to suppose that the new heavens and the new earth are to be found in some other part of God's universe. And taking in connection with this what is said of the heavens of glory, to which we have before referred, I have no doubt that that locality is intended.

"The new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, are spoken of as something previously promised ; but where have we the promise of such a physical regeneration of the earth ? The production of such a promise is necessary to sustain this interpretation. But if we take the language in a figurative sense, it is beautifully descriptive of that glorious, holy, and happy place which is so often promised as the abode of the righteous.

“There is a promise of ‘new heavens and a new earth.’ (Isa. 65 : 17, and 66 : 22.) But that related to the holy and happy state of the Church after the captivity, and probably to a future happy state of the Church, yet to be realized in this world. The new heavens and new earth here have only a spiritual significance ; and if this promise is referred to by the apostle Peter, as revealing a still more glorious destiny for the Church than will be attained in this world, does not the analogy which must be maintained throughout exclude entirely the idea of a physical regeneration of the material heavens and earth ?”

*Answer.* 1. We can not adopt an interpretation of any passage which will make the Scriptures contradict themselves ; but the interpretation of 2 Pet. 3 : 10, as above given, makes the Scriptures contradict themselves ; therefore it must be rejected. We prove the minor by the following texts :

Ps. 104 : 5, “Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed FOREVER.” If the Scriptures of the psalmist and the apostle “were given by the inspiration of God,” then the Spirit in this particular clearly contradicts himself on the supposition that the aforesaid interpretation of Peter be correct. But no other meaning can be given to the psalmist’s words than that which lies upon their surface ; whereas another and a better signification than the one presented by the objection can be fairly put upon the apostle’s declaration : therefore the interpretation as above given must be rejected. See also Ps. 119 : 90, “Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth ;” Eccl. 1 : 4, “The earth abideth FOREVER.”

2. If the "new heavens and earth" be a *figure*, "descriptive of that glorious and happy place promised as the abode of the righteous;" or if it mean "the future happy state of the Church;" then the burning up of the earth is a figure also, to denote not its annihilation but its *purification*, according to the doctrine of the Belgic Confession. This position would be the more tenable since Peter's words give more plausible ground for a figurative signification; whereas the phrase, "new heavens and new earth," can not be figurative at all, because *there is no figure in it*.

3. But as we resort not to any such unscholarly assumption as the fabrication of figures where the laws of language forbid it, we take Peter's words literally; observing that they are in harmony with other scriptural passages touching the same point. Ps. 102 : 25, 26, quoted by Paul : "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth : and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall *perish*, but thou shalt endure : yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment ; as a vesture shalt thou *change* them, and they *shall be changed*"—not destroyed. Now, Peter says, speaking of the antediluvian period, "The world that then was, *κοσμος*, being overflowed with water, *perished*." We know that this does not mean the total destruction of the material globe, but only of what was on its surface; and that the earth was renewed. Moreover, God said, Gen. 9 : 11, "Neither shall there any more be a flood to *destroy* the earth." The bow became a sign for "*perpetual* generations." Peter says, "The heavens and the earth, which are *now*, are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and *perdition* of

*ungodly men.*" "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

Here are three specifications respecting the disaster which shall come upon the earth:

1st. "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise." This can not mean the *expanses* themselves, but only the atmosphere shall pass by with a *rushing noise*. This evidently means that counter-currents of air, producing a furious tempest, shall rush in all directions, and with the roar of the tornado shall be in violent commotion. There is no such action expressed as a rushing of the air in mighty whirlwinds *away from* the earth, but *around* the earth, and along its surface. This is clearly the meaning, for if the atmosphere were released from the law of gravity binding it at the surface, it would instantly quit the earth, physically incapable of making any noise at all, and leaving man physically unable to hear any noise.

2d. "The elements shall melt with fervent heat." The word elements must apply to *solid* bodies, for it is said that they shall *melt*. The mineral substances of the earth in a state of fusion shall be expelled by volcanic action upon the surface, producing a conflagration that shall sweep over its surface for the destruction of the wicked, and the consumption of whatever may be upon its surface. It does not necessarily denote that all the elementary particles of the solid earth shall be fused; for that would involve annihilation of the figure of it, and the reduction of the whole to primitive chaos, which contradicts passages already quoted. Extensive

volcanic action is all that is required to realize a literal fulfillment.

3d. "And the earth and the works therein shall be burned." That is, all things on the surface of the earth, subjected to the fiery flood of fused elements thrown from its bowels, shall be consumed. This meets all the demands of the text.

Now, since Peter says that the object of this conflagration is for the destruction of the grossly wicked, we are not forced to the conclusion, as some think, that the conflagration must be either absolutely universal or simultaneous, for the general statements of this text would be fulfilled by portions of the world successively undergoing this fiery ordeal. See this whole subject exhaustively treated by Mr. D. N. Lord, in his admirable work, "The Coming and Reign of Christ," pp. 286-327.

4. Rev. 21 : 1, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth : for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." This of course is symbolical language as used by John. But the symbol must be taken from a great reality, and the statement of that reality is given by Isaiah 65 : 17, "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth : and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." This is plain language, and tells what is to be literal fact, because there is no figure of any kind in it, being a plain prosaic prediction of what God will do. But if it mean only "the happy state of the Church," as the objector supposes, asserting it to be a figure of speech, then we have the absurdity of John creating a *symbol* out of a figure of speech ! But since a symbol must be some-



thing in actual existence familiar to us by materialistic experience, John's vision necessarily presupposes Isaiah's prophecy to be a fixed material fact. The new heavens and the new earth are the old ones renewed, just as the "new man in Christ Jesus" is the old man renewed by regeneration.

But the objector asks, "Where have we the promise of such a physical regeneration of the earth?" We answer, In the text just quoted and in Isaiah 66 : 22. The words of Christ, Matt. 19 : 28, are based upon this *fact*: "Ye which have followed me, in the *regeneration* when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon thrones." Here the word *regeneration* necessarily is descriptive of the physical renewal we are speaking of; and if any thing is needed to make it clearer, we have only to turn to Rom. 8 : 19-23. This is demonstration. If we arbitrarily make figures of speech for the sacred writers, in order to support any theory not deducible from their plain language fairly interpreted, we do them and ourselves a great wrong. The very license taken by the objector is just as fairly assumed by the Universalist in denying future punishment, and by the Unitarian to justify his robbery of the Lord Jesus.

But Postmillenarians have given up this gratuitous and irrational assumption, the proof of which we present in the following extract from "Outlines of Theology," by A. A. Hodge, p. 457 :

"Many of the older theologians thought that these passages (Ps. 102 : 26, 27; Is. 51 : 6; Rom. 8 : 19-23; Heb. 12 : 26, 27; 2 Pet. 3 : 10-13; Rev. 20 and 21) indicated that the whole existing physical universe

was to be destroyed. This view is now universally discarded. Some held that this earth is to be annihilated.

"The most common and probable opinion is, that at 'the restitution of all things,' Acts 3 : 12, this earth, with its atmosphere, is to be subjected to intense heat, which will radically change its present physical condition, introducing in the place of the present a higher order of things, which shall appear as 'a new heavens and a new earth,' where 'the creature itself, also, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God,' (Rom. 8 : 19-23 ;) and wherein the constitution of the new world will be adapted to the 'spiritual' or resurrection bodies of the saints, (1 Cor. 15 : 44 ;) to be the scene of the heavenly society, and, above all, to be the palace-temple of the God-man forever, (Eph. 1 : 14 ; Rev. 5 : 9, 10 ; 21 : 1-5.) See also 'Fairbairn's Typology,' vol. i. pt. ii. ch. ii. sec. 7."

This is good millenarian doctrine, and by the *concession* the author has completely emasculated the anti-millenarian argument he has synoptically drawn up on a previous page. If the renewed earth is to be "*the palace-temple of the God-man forever*," then he must reign as king, and execute his kingly office upon the earth forever.

W. R. G.

## ESSAY VII.

### ΠΑΡΟΥΣΙΑ, OR, THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN.

THIS phrase, often occurring in our Lord's great prophecy in Matt. 24 and 25, demands special notice, because the errors of postmillenarians have been long bolstered by an interpretation wholly unwarranted.

"The coming of the Son of Man," we have been taught to believe, has a threefold meaning, though not so indicated in the prophecy itself, nor in any other portion of the Scriptures. One of these is his *figurative* coming at the destruction of Jerusalem; another is his *spiritual* coming at the beginning of the millennium; another is his *personal* coming at the day of Judgment, that is, when the millennial age shall close. Thus Burkitt on Matt. 24 : 27 : "There is a threefold coming of Christ spoken of in the New Testament. 1. His coming in his spiritual kingdom by the preaching of the Gospel among the Gentiles. 2. His coming to destroy Jerusalem forty years after his ascension. 3. His final coming to the judgment of the great day."

We proceed now to prove that neither of these views can be correct, by showing that the phrase in question can have but *one* meaning, namely, that of *bodily presence*, which shall be manifested to the world, not at the close but at the *opening* of the aforesaid age.

We all glory in the doctrine of the Incarnation. Christ is "GOD manifest in the flesh." Jesus is MAN, "in whom dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily." These natures do not interpenetrate each other, but are so distinct that a class of passages is appropriated to one, and another class to the other, which can not be indiscriminately used of both.

He was necessarily God and Man in one person, that he might be equal to *both* parties between whom he mediates. He was, therefore, an *original* Being, the like of whom has not, and shall never exist. What, therefore, is true of his divine nature is not true of his humanity, nor can the affirmations respecting his Manhood be made of his Godhead. He called himself "the Son of Man;" his apostles called him "the Son of God." With the former phrase we have no trouble, knowing that it exclusively refers to his *human* nature. The latter phrase must, therefore, refer exclusively to his *divine* nature. We can not maintain that the *human* nature of our Redeemer was, like the other, the Son of God, without being forced to admit the Popish dogma, that "Mary was the mother of God." "No man," says the Baptist, "hath seen God at any time. The only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Jesus was never in the bosom of the Father, and when he ascended, it was to take a place at his *right hand*. Now, the word *παρουσία*, translated "coming," is never applied to our Saviour as God, but is always predicated of him as *man*. While we never can be too jealous of his divinity, we must not allow this feeling to push his humanity too far into the background of our regard.

Both are equally prominent. "Our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ" is also "*that man* whom God hath ordained to judge the world in righteousness," and who for this purpose is to come back again to the earth in the same manner as he went away, (Acts 1 : 11,) and not only so, but to the same place whence he departed, (Zech. 14 : 4.) Now, if language can prove any thing, we shall prove that no other "coming of the Son of Man" is spoken of, by showing that this phrase always means his bodily presence, and can never mean a spiritual coming; for there is no more sense in the spiritual coming of a man than there is in the bodily coming of a spirit. The word "coming," when applied to a spiritual or providential visitation, must always be used in a metaphorical sense, which sense can never be used to denote the coming of a man.

Let it be observed that the term descriptive of our Lord's second coming, *παρουσία*, always means *bodily presence*, and never means any thing else. Our translation of it, therefore, namely, "coming," is correct only as it is confined to this idea. Now for the proof:

2 Cor. 10 : 10 : "For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence (*παρουσία*) is weak." It is manifest that "coming" would not be a proper translation.

Phil. 2 : 12 : "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, (*παρουσία*), but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation," etc. "Coming" would not be allowable in this connection.

1 Thess. 2 : 19 : "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our



Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" This is a very strong passage, where *παρουσία* is intensified by *εμ-προσθεν*. See the Greek text.

1 Cor. 16 : 17 : "I am glad of the coming (*παρουσία*) of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus."

2 Cor. 7 : 6 : "Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming (*παρουσία*) of Titus."

Phil. 1 : 26 : "That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming (*παρουσία*) to you again."

These texts fix the sense of this term so precisely that there can be no mistake as to its proper meaning; and when it is used to explain what is meant by the coming of the Son of Man, it must have this meaning, and no other, unless we are informed of a *peculiar* sense. But no such information is given.

Matt. 24 : 3 : "Tell us what shall be the sign of thy coming," (*παρουσία*.) When the disciples asked this question, it can not be doubted that they meant the personal presence of Christ, nor have we the least intimation that they ever attached any other meaning to the term. In his answer, if our Lord had employed it in any instance to signify a different thing, beyond all doubt common honesty—pardon the expression—would have prompted him to tell them of such peculiar use; but he did no such thing. What did he say? "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall the coming (*παρουσία*) of the Son of Man be." The very comparison, we must see, prohibits any other sense than that of personal presence. Again he says, "But as the days of

Noah were, so shall also the coming (*παρουσία*) of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away, so shall also the coming (*παρουσία*) of the Son of Man be." "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh."

2 Pet. 3 : 12: "Hasting unto the *παρουσία* of the day of God," namely, its actual presence.

In their exposition of this prophetic discourse, our postmillenarian brethren tell us that reference is first made to the *figurative* coming of Christ to effect the destruction of Jerusalem, and then the word slides into the natural meaning of personal presence at the day of judgment! But where is the proof of this? Not a syllable fell from the lips of Christ to show that in any instance he used this word with a *double* meaning, or in a peculiar sense. Is it not, then, amazing that such a statement could ever have been made without *some* show of divine authority; much more, that it could ever have gained the acquiescence of expositors who are not slow or inapt to subject every word to the rigid laws of language? Is it not strange, that for so long a time it should have gained the general consent of good men, who are very far from supposing that Christ misled his inquiring disciples in the smallest particular? There is no way of accounting for it but by the dominion of prepossessions and the tyranny of prejudice. Throughout this discourse, the explanatory language of Christ must lead us to take

the “παρουσία of the Son of Man,” in *every* instance, to mean bodily presence.

To make this doubly sure, let us turn to the Epistles. The mother of the following texts, beyond all doubt, is the phrase in question, 1 Cor. 15 : 23, “Afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming,” (παρουσία.) So in 1 Thess. 2 : 19 ; 3 : 13 ; 4 : 15 ; 2 Thess. 2 : 1, 8 ; James 5 : 7, 8 ; 2 Peter 1 : 16 ; 1 John 2 : 28. In all these passages—and there are no others in which παρουσία is used—reference is had, confessedly on all hands, to Christ’s literal coming at the second advent. But our brethren tell us that “the coming of the Son of Man” is a phrase used to denote *various* events. This we deny, and call for proof. We have referred to all the passages in the Epistles where this descriptive term is used. They all are connected with the subject of the final consummation. There is no dispute here. Proof our brethren may think they have ; but if they will only attempt formally to show where the “παρουσία of the Son of Man” may be, by the context, consistently shown to bear the meaning of a figurative or a spiritual coming, we think they will give it up in despair. For in all instances Christ used this formula, ἡ παρουσία τοῦ Υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, to mean one definite, unmistakable event, and all other meanings are perversions of his language. By our quotations we have shown that this phrase has but one fixed and constant use by Christ, and that, in the same sense of this *mother* phrase, the apostles have as constantly connected the coming of the Lord with the “times of restitution,” beyond the *beginning* of which the heavens can not hold the Son of Man. If there were an excep-

tional case, it would be necessary for clear reasons that the Spirit should notify us of special usage. Has he done so? No, not a solitary instance can be found. Where, then, is the proof for the figurative or the spiritual coming of the Son of Man? Nowhere. Not another event, besides his personal coming, can be shown to be covered by the phrase in question. This being so, an imposition of various meanings is *adding to the Word of God* as well as perverting the language of Christ.

Now, we do not mean to deny that Christ is present with the Church by the Holy Spirit. When he ascended, in the further discharge of his official work, the Holy Spirit descended to the discharge of his, as the Comforter. This vicegerent came to prevent that state of *orphanage* to which the people of God would have been abandoned, had there been no temporary substitute for the personal presence of their Lord. By his attribute of omnipresence, wherever even two or three are met in his name, there Christ is present, to bless them; but this is not his personal *παρουσία*. The spiritual coming of Christ, and the coming of Christ by his Spirit, are not identical propositions. The former we do not believe in—otherwise we would believe in consubstantiation; the latter *idea*, expressive of a great truth, we do receive and rejoice in, as the pledge of Christ's love. The former, like the alleged figurative coming, is, we think, a great and unfortunate misunderstanding of divine truth; the latter is everywhere in the New Testament, and by every Christian recognized as the most beneficent bestowment of God. Christ, as the Son of God, is the administrator of Providence, for

all power in heaven and earth is his; and therefore his providential visitations, either for judgment or for mercy, are metaphorically represented in Revelation as a coming to the churches of Ephesus, Pergamos, and Sardis; but this is quite a different thing from the *παρουσία* of the SON OF MAN.

Professor FAIRBAIRN, after commingling various passages where the word "*coming*" is used, to imply literal, metaphorical, and providential significations, and without regard to the question whether it be alike or differently descriptive of God's visitation or Christ's advent, sums up by saying, (Prophecy, p. 445:)

"From the general current, therefore, of scriptural representations concerning Christ; from the language employed in the Book of Revelation, and in other parts of the New Testament, it is plain that the question of Christ's second advent, or his coming, not to depart again, but to dwell with his people, *is not to be determined by the mere announcement of his coming*!" By what, then, is it to be determined? Must the question be decided by the solemn dicta of Professors of Theology, speaking authoritatively *ex cathedrâ*? Is there no appeal from the illogical assumptions and fallacious paragraphs of human authors to the Word itself? Only think of this declaration, "The fact of the coming of Christ to dwell with his people, not to depart again, is not to be determined by the mere announcement of his coming," a declaration drawn from such statements as the following, (p. 437:): "The Lord was as really present at the destruction of Sodom, at the deliverance of Israel from the host of Pharaoh, and at the restoration of the captives from Babylon,



as in the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth. There was a *proper coming*, and an *actual presence* in the earlier as well as the later events referred to." No distinction is made between these providential visitations of God and the *παρουσία* of the Son of Man; but all are summed up in the general conclusion above quoted. What logical coherence is there between that and the premises? None at all. When God is "represented as 'coming down to see and hear' how matters stood," (p. 435,) what has that to do in determining the meaning of the "coming," *παρουσία*, of the Son of Man? Nothing at all. When our Lord, as "the Alpha and Omega," or in other words, as God, even "the Lord God of the holy prophets," represents himself in Rev. 2:5, as *coming* to remove the candlestick out of its place, what possible bearing has that upon "the question of Christ's second advent or his coming, not to depart again, but to dwell with his people"? None at all. When a writer represents all these providential comings of Deity, and the coming of the humanity of Christ in the second advent, as alike *proper* comings, and *actual* presences, and argues from the former to determine the meaning of the latter, who is there incapable of detecting the fallacy so transparently conspicuous? Yet such is the proof to support the doctrine of the spiritual coming and reign of the Son of Man!

In a worse way, Dr. Hatfield writes. (Amer. Pres. Theo. Review, vol. ii. new series, April, 1864, p. 203.) After making certain quotations from the New Testament, he says: "In these passages, the only ones that seem expressly to teach the doctrine of the Second

Advent, that event is spoken of as a *παρουσία*, as an *επιφανεία*, a *φανέρωσις*, an *αποκαλυψίς*, or by some of the forms of the verb *ερχομαι*; *all of which terms are also used in relation to his first advent* "!!!

This statement has been made quite too rashly, and without any examination; *for there is not a single instance in the New Testament* where either of the nouns mentioned is applied to the *first advent* of Christ, while "the forms of the verb" spoken of, can have no bearing upon the point in question. On the other hand, these forms are mostly used to indicate the second coming of the Lord, to which event the participle *ἐρχόμενος* is almost always applied when it stands associated with a pronoun referring to Christ. (Matt. 11 : 3 ; 16 : 28 ; 23 : 39 ; Mark 13 : 26 ; 14 : 62 ; Luke 7 : 19, 20 ; 21 : 27 ; Heb. 10 : 37 ; Rev. 1 : 4, 8 ; 11 : 17.)

They who undertake to combat this doctrine, should beware of such gross blunders in Greek; for they will be as sure of detection as those made in English.

That the millennium as described by the spirit of prophecy is still in the future, all history proves. Never has such an era occurred on earth, carrying grace, mercy, and peace to all its inhabitants. This is admitted. By the testimony of our Lord, persecutions and all varieties of moral disorder and physical unhappiness and unrest shall prevail until he comes; and when he comes, the event shall be made known by a startling appearance. "Then shall appear the SIGN of the Son of Man in the heaven," by which we suppose must be meant the Son of Man himself for a while stationary there, that every eye may see him. The *sign* of Jonah the prophet meant Jonah himself

in a peculiar position. The *sign* of circumcision was circumcision as a sign of something else. So the sign of the Son of Man in heaven will be the *brightness of his appearing*, as the sign of his own immediate advent. The effect of this sudden and awful apparition will be an appalling one to the world, but of ineffable joy to his own people. The nations of the earth crouching in their wickedness, thus arrested, shall call upon the rocks to fall on them; the ancient people of God shall stretch out their hands with faith and penitence prompting the cry, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." "The earnest expectation of the creature (creation) waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God," shall then be fulfilled. "The mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands."

"O scenes surpassing fable, and yet true!  
 Scenes of accomplished bliss! which who can see,  
 Though but in distant prospect, and not feel  
 His soul refreshed with foretaste of the joy?"

Now we submit the question, Has it not been proved that the "coming of the SON OF MAN" is a phrase inapplicable to his divinity, inappropriate to any other idea except that of his bodily presence? *Παρουσία* has no other meaning; and *ερχομαί*, when its subject is a human being, always conveys the same sense. There is no escape from this.

#### OBJECTIONS.

The only text upon which a halt can be made at all, is Matt. 10:23. We therefore present it under this topic as the

*First Objection.* "Verily, I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come." An anonymous writer in the *Intelligencer*, presented this objection: "Now, if this mean a literal coming of the Saviour, we are bound to suppose that the twelve are still at this hour prosecuting their mission among the cities of Israel. For our Lord always spoke the truth, and he has not yet come the second time without sin unto salvation."

*Answer.* Whatever be obscure in this passage, one thing is plain. The coming of Christ in his *human* nature must be meant. It is not spoken of the *divine*. The objection lies with a heavier weight against the theory of the objector; and because *unable to explain how the man Christ Jesus can come spiritually, he is not entitled to urge it against our view as above given.* But waiving this, we reply that the context helps us to a solution to which we are shut up by the absurdity of postmillenarian exegesis, which we shall presently notice.

The context reads thus, "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily ye shall not have *finished* the cities of Israel," etc. See the Greek. Finished what? Their mission, of course. "Go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." The ellipsis must be thus supplied: "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, preaching the kingdom, till the period when the Son of Man shall come."

The apostles did their duty; they commenced, but did not FINISH this business—not for the want of *time*, but on account of *persecution*. They succeeded in

some cities, but had to flee from others, and from others were thrust out. The Son of Man has not yet come, nor have the apostles or their successors in the ministry gone over the cities of Israel, as they were in the days of Christ, or as they have been since, in the dispersion, preaching the kingdom. Christ gave them a duty to discharge, but he as distinctly said that they should not accomplish it before his second advent. Doubtless they did not then understand him, but the history and the context of our passage make all things plain.

1st. The history. This command was given not later probably than six months after the baptism of Christ. His ministry continued three years from that time. The area over which these twelve men had to travel was far less than that of the State of New-York; and the towns in Judea were not so numerous but that they could have gone over them on foot, in the execution of their mission, within one year, very easily. Mark tells us they set out by twos, of course in six different directions; and they afterward returned and "gathered themselves unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught." If the instructions of this chapter were exclusively confined to the apostles, and if the apostles fulfilled their duty, which could be done in a year, then we must believe that Christ's coming, spoken of in the text, occurred *before he went away*—an evident absurdity.

2d. But if the adverse circumstances related in this chapter did not all occur to the apostles in this journey, as we have no reason to think they did, and as we read



of no other like it in the time of Christ, we are forced to conclude that this chapter, like the last six verses of this gospel, must refer to their *successors* in the ministry as well as to themselves. Nor are we singular in this statement. A distinguished commentator, Olshausen, *in loco*, says: "The special reference of the instruction to the impending mission of the twelve has become, in the hands of the Evangelist, altogether of a general character, so that we have received, in this discourse or address of Jesus to his disciples, an universal code of instruction as regards themselves and their *united* apostolic ministry; yea, as regards all missionaries for all future times."

Now, we are willing to contrast this exposition with those of our opponents. They tell us that this text refers "*either* to the destruction of Jerusalem, *or* to the power of the Spirit in the spread of the Gospel." They will have it to be one or the other, but are not decided which is the true interpretation. In our opinion it refers to *neither*.

1st. It can not refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, for the very good reason given by Adam Clarke. He says:

"The word *to go over* here is generally understood as intimating that there should not be time for the disciples to travel over the cities of Judah before the destruction predicted by Christ should take place; but this is very far from the truth, as there were not less than FORTY years after this was spoken before Jerusalem was destroyed."

The question of *time*, therefore, is not to be thought of; for the only thing fairly deducible from the text

and scope is this : The disciples should be driven from the Jewish cities, and not allowed to preach the kingdom of God in them ; and THAT—not the *nearness* of Christ's coming in *any* sense—THAT was the reason why they should not complete the business of preaching in all the cities of Israel. The difficulty in this text is owing to two things : The absence of parallel passages, and Matthew's habit of *grouping* the sayings of our Lord, uttered on different occasions, so as to make it quite uncertain whether he has given this saying in its original connection. Still, the explanation here given is quite consistent with the whole drift of the New Testament ; while, on the other side, the post-millenarian explanation is sheer distraction. The *spiritualistic* interpreters can speak with no positiveness as to its meaning, and can do nothing better than *guess*. Thus the author of the Dutch Annotations, Calvin, and Lightfoot, while disagreeing among themselves, all opposed Whitby, Blomfield, Barnes, and Clarke.

2d. It can not refer to the power of the Spirit in the spread of the Gospel, because the coming of the Spirit was not the coming of the Son of Man. The very reason why the former was sent, was because the latter *went away* to remain at the right hand of God "*until* the times of restitution." Now *ubiquity* does not belong to the manhood of our Redeemer. It can not be in two places at the same time ; and since the coming spoken of relates to the person of Christ, the exposition of postmillenarians can not be true.

3d. But if Christ may come in any other sense than *παρουσία* expresses, then we have no certain evidence that he will ever come back personally to the earth.

If he shall reign on the earth only by the Spirit, then he shall judge only by the Spirit, because judging is an essential part of his kingly office. It is in the character of a *king* that he will execute judgment; but if he shall reign spiritually and not personally on the earth, he must execute judgment in the same way. Hence that Christ will *never come at all* is a corollary from postmillenarianism. But this is contrary to their own belief. Hence their exposition of Matt. 10:23 is a false gloss, the proof of which corroborates our view of the passage, thus shown to be in harmony with the doctrine of the personal reign.

*Second Objection.* "Death to each individual is virtually the coming of the Son of Man. 'Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.'" (Matt. 24:44.)

*Answer.* There is nothing more familiar to the recollection of Gospel-hearers than the use of this text to describe the advent of death; but of all perversions ever imposed upon any verse this is the grossest.

1st. The phrase must evidently be used in the *same* sense throughout the chapter. We have shown that it can have but one meaning—and that means the second advent of Christ, not the advent of death.

2d. There is no instance in the New Testament where death is symbolically spoken of as a "coming of the Lord," or "the coming of Christ." It is a dishonor put upon our Redeemer to make him who is "Life Eternal" in any of his acts the symbol of death. Is the work of the devil to be symbolized by the spiritual coming of Christ, when his first advent was to destroy it? No two things can be more dissimilar. At

death the believer *departs* to be with Christ where he now is ; Christ does not *come* to him in any sense, certainly not in the sense of death's advent. It is utterly amazing how men fail to see the incongruity of such "accommodation" as makes the fountain of LIFE the symbol of DEATH !

The bearing of this essay upon the doctrine of the premillennial advent of our Redeemer is important. It demonstrates the absurdity of the *spiritual* reign of a *human* being—for however exalted, the Son of Man was no more than that—an organized body and a rational soul. The Son of God is the Creator and upholder of all things, (Col. 1 : 16, 17 ;) but we are not now speaking of Godhead. It is the manhood of our Redeemer alone, as the Second Adam, who is to recover the dominion lost in the fall, and exercise it as the King of all the earth. If his offices of prophet, priest, and king alike belong to his humanity, each must have a sphere for its manifestation in accordance with its nature. If, then, the two former offices were discharged among men, the third must in *like manner* bear a visible relation to them existing as subjects of a visible king within the realm of a visible kingdom, which shall be shown to be the whole earth regenerated, and adapted to a regenerate race.

W. R. G.

## ESSAY VIII.

### THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

OUR Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is our Prophet, Priest, and King. These three offices he holds as the SON OF MAN. During his presence upon the earth "this man" uttered the most wonderful prophecies on record, and gave instructions so heavenly, that in the opinion of enemies, "never man spake as this man." He was a literal Prophet on earth.

"This man" bore our sins in his own body on the tree, and thus in the execution of his priestly office he sacrificed himself for us on the altar of the cross. He was a literal Priest on earth.

"This man" was born to be a king, in the ordinary sense of that word as descriptive of a human sovereign; but in the days of his flesh he did not reign. Instead, he was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." He was, however, a king *de jure*, but not a king *de facto*. Analogy and propriety would seem to indicate that he must yet be literally a King, executing this office, as he did the other two, upon the earth.

Now this is just what the Scriptures say he shall do. Luke 1 : 32, 33 : "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest : and the Lord God shall



give unto him the *THRONE* of his father David: and *HE SHALL REIGN OVER THE HOUSE OF JACOB FOREVER; AND OF HIS KINGDOM THERE SHALL BE NO END.*"

The whole of the interview between Gabriel and Mary is a plain relation of predicted fact, *without any figure of speech*, mark; and the literal accomplishment of a part is surety for a literal accomplishment of the whole. No one who understands the laws of figurative language can dispute this.

The Old Testament everywhere imparts information upon this matter, and hence we are not surprised that the Jewish mind was fully possessed with the idea that the Messiah should be a king over a kingdom of commanding sway. Christ himself went about through all the cities and villages of Judea, preaching the Gospel of the *kingdom*. This, too, was the burden of discourse by his disciples sent forth to proclaim the good news; and when our Lord was asked by Pilate as to his claims, he declared that he *was a king*, and expected a *kingdom*. Paul said to the elders of Ephesus, "Behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching *the kingdom of God*, shall see my face no more." The phraseology descriptive of the Gospel of the grace of God is this, "The word of the kingdom." We hardly need say, the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God, the kingdom of Christ, all mean the same thing; but it is of importance to settle on a firm scriptural basis.

I. What is the nature of the kingdom of Christ? Will it be a *spiritual* kingdom, or will it be a material kingdom, *sui generis*, combining *heavenly* happiness

and *earthly* glory? Will it be purely a reign of spiritual *principles* in the hearts of all men, or will it be the outward dominion of a personal king, upon an actual throne, reigning in righteousness over the regenerate earth? Let us humbly ask, with a teachable disposition, what saith the Scriptures?

We will now only refer to Daniel, second chapter, where is recorded a divinely inspired exposition of a symbolic dream. Let it be read.

Here all are agreed, that the four great monarchies of Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome, in their succession to earthly sovereignty, are clearly indicated by the different metals composing the great image in the dream; and that the stone cut out without hands as clearly symbolizes the kingdom of Christ. These four great earthly powers, historically and chronologically, fill up the whole space of time intervening between the reign of Nebuchadnezzar and the destructive agency of the stone-kingdom, (verse 44.) "*In the days of these kings (the rulers of the toe-kingdoms) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to OTHER PEOPLE, (no more succession,) BUT IT SHALL BREAK IN PIECES AND CONSUME ALL THESE KINGDOMS, AND IT SHALL STAND FOREVER.*" Where shall it STAND? Surely in the place of those demolished.

Now, it is very clear that a sound exegesis demands us to preserve consistency in the imagery. It must require a oneness that shall exclude all variableness of meaning. The whole passage must be either all literal or all spiritual. The kingdoms are of *one kind*,

and must be taken together, unless we are warned not to do so in the inspired prophetic narrative. But no such warning is given. The stone-kingdom succeeds to the same PLACE and POWER from which its predecessors had been dislodged; not only so, but greatly exceeds all powers that existed before it in the world. It shall fill *the whole earth*, having the outward material appearance of a kingdom, like that of its predecessors before their being broken to pieces.

Can we now determine from this passage what shall be the *nature* of the kingdom of Christ? We think there is no difficulty. If these four powers were only *spiritual* monarchies, denoting the *reign of bad principles* in the hearts of men, unquestionably the power that destroys them can only mean the *power of gospel principles* gaining ascendancy in the heart. But if Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome were veritable, visible, material, terrestrial empires, then beyond question the stone-kingdom or the kingdom of the saints must also be *veritable, visible, material, terrestrial*; and as such, shall subdue all the earth. We do not see how this can be evaded without cutting up by the roots every reliable rule of interpretation by which the meaning of language can be certainly ascertained. It becomes those who deny it to give a respectable reason, showing how it comports with an avowed Revelation to proclaim that a mighty kingdom shall succeed to all others and fill the earth, and yet that it shall be no kingdom at all, in the *sense* of that term as applied to its predecessors.

We know that this kingdom has been, and still is declared to mean simply the GOSPEL, whose expanding

spiritual power will yet evangelize the whole human race, and bring this wayward world back to its allegiance, and into its consequential millennial happiness. But analogy and reason are against this interpretation, as we have just seen; and what is of more consequence, the Scripture is against it too. Where, in the New Testament, is the "Gospel of the kingdom" identified with "the kingdom" itself? Nowhere. Where is the promise that the Gospel, by the reign of truth, or by the power of the Holy Spirit applying it to the hearts of all mankind, shall bring the world into the rest and holiness of millennial bliss? Nowhere. Its great design is to gather the elect of God out of this "present world," and by this work it shall fulfill its mission. If it notify us of an *invisible* kingdom with an invisible king as *successor* to the *visible* kingdoms of the earth, we shall be glad to know it; but if not, where is the proof?

How often we are told that Jerusalem in prophetic scripture means only the Church, and that "Zion is a type of the Church of God"! But in Micah 3:12, we read: "Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest." If we must regulate our faith by this typical theology, then, since type and antitype must correspond in all main points of resemblance, we have a bad prospect indeed; for the Church of God must be entirely destroyed! We are therefore forced to the conclusion that this *spiritualizing* of Hebrew localities, as it is called, by proving too much, completely refutes itself as a correct principle of interpretation. If, however,

these localities must be *spiritualized*, and the kingdom aforesaid be regarded as the expansion of the Gospel, we have a right to demand the proof. Does any interpreting angel inform us? We are instructed that "the seven candlesticks" mean "the seven churches." Have we any notification that the kingdom does not mean that, but the *Gospel*? No, nothing like it. If, according to our rules, the Bible must be interpreted like any other book, by what authority do men change the language of Revelation so that it does not reveal what it professes to reveal?

But we have not done with Daniel. Chap. 7 : 13 : "I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the *Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven*, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a *kingdom*, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him." Now, in the heavenly-immortal state, we can not suppose that nations and languages exist, as we find them on earth, hence the kingdom spoken of must be on earth, and nowhere else; and since it is said, "*His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed*," we are reduced to the necessity of believing that it shall exist on earth *forever*. This is put beyond all question by the interpreter, v. 27 : "The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom UNDER THE WHOLE HEAVEN, shall be given to the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions (rulers) shall serve and obey him."

Prof. FAIRBAIRN, in his book on Prophecy, p. 447,



quoting this text, says, "If this language does not certainly betoken, it yet serves naturally to imply something more than the infusion of a better spirit into the kingdoms of the world; to indicate an actual remodeling of the state of things among men, and a fresh organization of the social fabric, such as would formally commit the administration of affairs into the hands of the Lord's people by making personal piety and worth the essential qualification for civil rule"!! Did any body ever see a weaker effort to emasculate the words of inspiration? Is there no criminality connected with such an effort to pare down the strong language of prophecy in order to make it consistent with a theory predetermined by men in opposition to the vivid delineations of the Holy Ghost? Christ said to the High Priest, (Matt. 26 : 64 :) "Hereafter ye shall see *the Son of Man* sitting on the right hand of power, and *coming in the clouds of heaven.*" (Luke 21 : 27 ; Mark 14 : 62.) No one should fail to see that he applies the terms of this prophecy to his own second personal coming in the clouds, invested with the royalty of his kingly office, to establish this great kingdom of glory upon the earth; and therefore the whole of this interpretation must be understood according to its natural verbal meaning. We are shut up to this sense. Human ingenuity can not successfully evade it. It shall not be true that all people, nations, and languages will serve him *before* his coming in the clouds of heaven; but after he comes, then shall this service be universally rendered, because "the *knowledge* of the Lord shall cover the *earth*, as the waters cover the sea." Christ is the nobleman of his own beautiful parable,

who went into a far country to procure for himself a kingly sovereignty, and to *return* for the purpose of setting up that kingdom in which the will of God shall be done on *earth as it is in heaven*. (Luke 19 : 12-27.)

Having now shown from the Word of God, that the kingdom of Christ is to be a *material* kingdom, of immaculate holiness in principle and administration, pervading the earth renewed and delivered from the curse, we come to another important matter.

II. The ESTABLISHMENT of it. When shall this glorious consummation be realized? To answer intelligently, we must keep close to our only reliable source of information—the Holy Scriptures. There is a two-fold aspect, in which we are taught to view the great accumulative triumph of the Captain of our salvation over Satan, sin, death, and hell; the kingdom in mystery, the kingdom in manifestation; for, in the words of another, “it is upon this present earth that it must be shown and proved that the devil, who pretended to be its rightful lord, was only a usurper; man, who was created ‘to have dominion over earth,’ is to rejoice over *his* world with full, unmixed, holy joy. Every legitimate and true ideal will then become a reality.”

1. THE KINGDOM IN MYSTERY. The word *mystery*, must not now be encumbered with its modern definition. It does not mean, in the Scriptures, any thing inexplicable, or incomprehensible, but any thing secret or hidden; not an *unknowable*, but an *unknown* thing. (Matt. 13 : 11.) “It is given unto you to know *the MYSTERIES of the kingdom of heaven*.” (Mark 4 : 11 ; Luke 8 : 10.) In the parables beginning with the formula, “The kingdom of heaven is like,” the kingdom

is put, by metonymy, for the "mysteries" of the kingdom; just as in the expression, "Assyria, the rod of mine anger," the armies of Assyria are meant; and in Gal. 3 : 23, faith is put for the *object* of faith.

But what is meant by the kingdom in mystery? This: the secret formative power by which its elements are prepared, and the circumstantial arrangements made to put it in the ultimate position of a visible universal empire upon and over the earth. No kingdom has ever been formed without having been preceded by a certain preparatory process of gathering, arranging, and consolidating materials and influences for its formal establishment, and recognized sovereignty; and in proportion to the magnitude of the enterprise, the work of preparation is long and arduous. Nor will it be otherwise, with regard to the kingdom of Christ. Under the Old Testament dispensation, it was, as we have seen, a kingdom in *promise*; under the New Testament dispensation, it is a kingdom in *progress*; under the Millennial dispensation, it will be a kingdom in *position*. Agreeably to this, God himself has declared, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is, and I will give it him." (Ezek. 21 : 27.) Therefore when we read, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," "nigh," "even at the door," in the New Testament, we must understand the beginning of the process, by which it shall in due time be made manifest in all its glory. In other words, the mysteries of the kingdom were about to unfold in the strange providential process by which the great consummation should be reached. Now the gospel dispensation is the kingdom in progress, the ac-

cumulating of unformed elements. The history of the Gospel will be just the verification of the parables of our Lord, depicting as they do the "mysteries of this kingdom." Hence Paul speaks of the "mystery of the gospel," (Eph. 6 : 19,) and of God's opening "a door of utterance to speak the *mystery* of Christ." And thus evidently "the evangelical principle of faith can not be perfectly or thoroughly comprehended, except by the biblical fundamental view of the divine kingdom and its development."

The term kingdom always implies *locality*; and therefore when we read of a kingdom approaching, coming, drawing near, it seems to be an incongruous expression; but there are two meanings of this term in the original, which, if duly observed, will prevent all confusion of thought. The one is locality of realm subdued to the reign of a king; the other is the reign itself, abstractly considered. Thus when we speak of the *kingdom* of Victoria, we mean the realm; but when we speak of the *reign* of Victoria, we mean her royal sway. The one sense is limited to a territory, the other to kingly office. When the *locality* is meant, the kingdom of heaven is never said "to draw nigh," but when the *reign* is signified, the aforesaid phrase involves no confusion. Let it then be observed that the kingdom of heaven is loosely comprehensive of the process of elementary formation, and of the actual visible establishment, when Christ, as king, shall be localized upon "the THRONE of his glory" over the REALM of the whole earth. Thus the time taken for working out the "mysteries of the kingdom," precedes and is connected with the time of its actual ad-

ministration, and the whole is spanned from the first to the second coming of Christ, by the parables in Matt. 13, where we find the expression often repeated, "The kingdom of heaven is like." In this sense, and in no other, is the Gospel consistently viewed as belonging to the kingdom. We therefore accept that metaphorical designation of it made by divines, and so common in our modern pulpit phraseology—the *kingdom of grace*; after the manner of the speech of the learned, who discourse to us upon the kingdom of nature, and the animal, mineral, vegetable kingdoms; but this is not a scriptural expression, much less is it indicative of the main idea conveyed in Scripture. Yet as the Gospel, under the special guidance of the Holy Ghost, is the great instrumentality of gathering out of the world those who are and shall be the loyal subjects of Christ, to form the General Assembly and the Church of the FIRST-BORN which are enrolled in heaven, it is clear that the king, though absent now, *reigns* in the hearts of his people; but he does not reign on the throne of the kingdom proper, because it is not yet established. We therefore believe in the spiritual reign of Christ *now and here*. But our postmillenarian brethren join issue with us, and roundly say, that "Christ's throne is in the hearts of his people." If this be so, then what shall we make of the promise of the Redeemer in Rev. 3 : 21, "To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in MY throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father upon HIS throne"? Shall the triumphant believer *be enthroned in his own heart*? If this be so, then supreme selfishness shall be an attribute of supreme happiness!!



We believe that the Church is the "kingdom of Christ in mystery." In the hearts of all Christians, Christ reigns *spiritually*, but this is the *hidden informal* sovereignty of the king recognized over subjects, but not over a realm. It is by the office of the Holy Spirit, that the subjects, elements, and arrangements made, shall be combined in the work of preparation necessary to the manifestation of him upon his throne, who shall be "king of nations, as he is now king of saints," and whose shall be the dominion of the earth, UNDER THE WHOLE HEAVEN. This phrase in its connection determines the question of the outward regal form of the kingdom of Christ, and there is no escape from this conclusion. No stronger language could be used to convey the truth we contend for. When he comes personally to take the kingdom, then the era of millennial glory shall be inaugurated, and not before. We do not presume to declare this faith, much less to push it upon others without feeling ourselves "able to give a reason for the hope that is in us." We entreat the reader then to ponder the meaning of the parable of the Pounds, in Luke 19 : 11-27.

The occasion of its being spoken, is thus explained : "And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should *immediately* APPEAR." Mark the reason. This parable was uttered, not to dispute the fact, nor deny the establishment of a kingdom agreeably to the *promise* which was the basis of the people's expectation ; but to correct a certain mistake into which they had fallen, as to the time when "the God of heaven should set up his

kingdom." (Dan. 2 : 44.) "A certain nobleman went into a far country *to receive for himself a kingdom*, and to RETURN." No man can doubt that the nobleman is Christ himself, nor that the far country represents heaven, where he has gone to be invested with sovereignty. It seems also clear that the kingdom to be received is that specified in Dan. 7 : 13, 14. But not only had the nobleman to go into a far country to receive it, he had *to return before the kingdom could appear*. In the mean time, he intrusts to his ten servants, ten pounds, with the injunction, "Occupy TILL I come." This represents the work to be done by the Christian Church during the absence of her Lord, the period of which unfolds the "mysteries of the kingdom," as set forth by the parables of the Sower, the Tares, the Mustard-seed, the Leaven, the Draw-net, etc. We have the several issues of their work, and the conduct of his enemies before, and when he does return; but not a word throughout the parable, of any thing like the subjugation of his foes, till *after* that return. "His citizens hated him, and sent a messenger after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us." Let it be remembered that our postmillennial brethren admit that this parable spans the *whole* period from the first to the second advent of Christ: "till I come," without dispute, must be referred to his second personal coming. Now, at the *close* of the millennium we are assured that instead of *receiving for himself a kingdom*, he will *deliver up* the kingdom to God the Father, that He may be all in all. (1 Cor. 15 : 24.) But the parable goes on, "And it came to pass that *when he was returned*, HAVING RECEIVED THE KINGDOM," he exercised

the office of king, in rewarding his servants and punishing his enemies.

Thus, this parable affords a threefold proof, that it is at the *commencement*, and not at the *end* of the millennium when Christ's second advent takes place, and his kingdom proper shall be located. First, it clearly connects the return of the nobleman with his having received the kingdom. Second, the whole period of his absence is characterized by the various conduct of a *few* servants, and the turbulent enmity of the *mass* of his citizens sending after him the insults of a continuously rebellious spirit, "We will not." Third, the foes of the king are not destroyed until he comes **PERSONALLY** to do it. This is the plain and necessary import of the parable, proving both a premillennial coming of Christ, and a premillennial setting up of the kingdom. It is so transparently clear, that in contrast with the question to which it is an answer, it obviously is impossible to evade the doctrine taught without perverting the text.

In confirmation, let us now see what Dr. Whitby, the father of postmillenarianism, makes of it. He interlards the text with bracketed sentences to expound its meaning thus:

"He said therefore (*The kingdom of God is like to*) a certain nobleman (*who*) went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return, (*and thus shall I go to heaven, and be installed in my mediatory kingdom, and then return to execute the severest judgments on the nation for their non-proficiency.*) And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come, (that is, *improve them*

*till I come and take an account of your proficiency.)* But his citizens (*the Jews*) hated him, and sent a messenger after him, (*disclaiming and rejecting his authority, and*) saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded those servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, 'Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds,' etc." We need quote no more.

Now we maintain that the Doctor perverts the parable by prefixing the *formula* of "the kingdom of God is like to a nobleman." No such likeness is meant; the parable clearly relates to the conduct of Christ, and not to the kingdom at all, except as to the time of Christ's assuming it, (see Mark 13 : 34;) and all his bracketed sentences, therefore, only serve to obscure the text and mystify the reader. But it is to be particularly observed that the Doctor does not bracket the fifteenth verse, which is the main point of the parable, since upon it hinges the whole substance of the answer, "When he was returned, having received the kingdom." Upon this, however, we have the following note: "EITHER it respects his going to heaven, to sit down at the right hand of God, in majesty and glory, and then return to punish the unbelieving and obstinate Jews; OR going, by his apostles and disciples, to erect a kingdom among the Gentiles, and then coming, as it were, back to punish the Jews according to these words of his, 'The gospel of the kingdom shall be preached throughout ALL the world, for a testimony to ALL na-

tions, and then shall the end (of the Jewish polity) come' "!! Does not know which, and therefore it may be *neither*. What a lucid exposition!

Such is the plan of *spiritualizing* the Scriptures. Who does not see that upon either of these suppositions the question of the disciples is not answered at all? Our Lord is thus placed in the attitude of a heathen oracle, returning an answer enigmatically that does not at all accord with the reason given for uttering the parable. We confidently set the two interpretations side by side, and submit to the unprejudiced, whether ours is not the true, because the natural, obvious one, maintaining the unity of the parable as a plain and satisfactory answer to the question asked; and according with the specified reason why it was spoken at all. We submit whether the interpretation of Dr. Whitby, and postmillenarians generally, is either a pertinent answer to the question propounded, or one in accordance with the reason given for speaking the parable. We submit, if postmillenarians are right, whether our Lord ought not to have disabused the minds of his hearers, honestly entertaining a fatal mistake, into which they were led by all the prophets; whether he ought not to have told them that no such kingdom as they imagined should ever be set up; instead of uttering a parable calculated most forcibly to confirm them in their error, and only correcting them as to *time*? We see no way of avoiding a horrid implication against our blessed Lord, unless by adopting the premillenarian interpretation.

The whole period of the gospel dispensation is the kingdom of God in mystery or concealment. The king



is yet in the "far country." The kingdom that shall prevail over the earth, "under the whole heavens," is only in its formative state. The servants are still employed in the management of his interest who is to come, "having received the kingdom." The mass of those to whom the Gospel has been sent still reject him. "We will not have this man to reign over us." The time and process of preparation have been long. It is a mystery, in the modern acceptation of the term, that the seed sown by the "Son of Man" should have been productive only to a very limited extent, in comparison with the whole field sown. It is a mystery that tares should be allowed to occupy the same ground with the wheat, and that both shall continue to flourish until the harvest. It is a mystery that Christianity, like the mustard-tree, from the "smallest of seeds" should have reached its present position amid the conflicts of ages. It is a mystery that corruptions, like the silent but unperceived working of leaven, should have been allowed to pervade the visible Church. The history of Christianity is the history of the process by which the elements, subjects, influences, and combinations of diverse agencies shall eventually be arranged in the formal, outward, visible glory of a world-wide empire.

2. THE KINGDOM IN MANIFESTATION. The kingdom in mystery came not "with observation." The kingdom in manifestation will come "with power." That this must take place before the millennium, we proceed now to prove, hoping our readers will not forget that these parables, all are agreed, *span the whole time* between our Lord's two personal comings, exhibiting the "mysteries" to the pious servants of Christ,

but containing nothing, even by implication, which shadows forth an *intervening* millennium of universal peace and joy.

(1.) Matt. 23 closes with our Lord's words to the Jews: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth TILL *ye shall say*, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." When he thus left their house devoted to destruction, and his disciples, ignorant of what he meant, drew his attention to the magnificence of the temple, he said to them: "See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." Thus the intimation was given that the time would come when Christ's personal presence should be hailed by the Jews in the language of the 118th Psalm, which is Messianic, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord;" and which the disciples were at a loss to reconcile with the predicted fearful destruction that must have horrified them beyond measure. Therefore when they came to the Mount of Olives they gathered round the Master, and their anxiety betrayed an unwonted abruptness of address. "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what the *sign* of thy coming (*παρουσία*) and of the end of the world? (*αἰών*, *age*.)" Two distinct questions required and received two distinct answers.

The *first* relates to the desolation of the temple: "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you." (Matt. 24: 4-13.) In these verses and the parallel in Luke, many calamitous events are referred to, which, however terrific, should be re-

garded by them "as the beginning of sorrows." The answer to the question is pointedly given in Luke 21 : 20 : "And when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof draweth nigh."

The *second* question relates to a different matter. "What shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the age?" When shall the sign of thy personal appearance (*παρουσία*) be seen, at the sight of which the nation shall say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord"? Now, as this question refers to two *simultaneous* events, to which, by the construction, the same sign belongs, we must not separate them. It is of importance also to remember that our Lord intimates, by his quotation from the psalm above referred to, that when he should be seen again, it would be at the time of the national conversion. Jerusalem should first be destroyed, and the desolation be great; but Christ does not connect his *παρουσία* with that, but with the end of the *αἰών*. After he had answered the first question he said, "*But the end is not yet.*" When, then, will it be? (Luke 21 : 24.) After the destruction and dispersion, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." During this period of affliction, (Matt. 24 : 14,) "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in *all* the world, (*οἰκουμένην, the whole habitable earth,*) FOR A WITNESS unto *all* nations; THEN shall the end come." This is the answer to the second question.

Now, we ask, is there any intimation here of a millennium? We read of wars, commotions. famines,

pestilences, earthquakes, as the "beginning of sorrows;" and after this beginning, we read of persecutions, maliciousness, betrayals, apostasies, abounding iniquity, false teachers, etc., and these shall continue up to the end; but not one hint of a millennium of such bliss and purity and joy, such as the prophets delineate with great graphic power. Why is this? Was it because God's prophetic word should fail? No; but because no millennium, such as spiritualizers have long predicted, shall ever prevail over a foot of earth, until Christ's kingdom shall have subdued it all by its own powerful manifestation, to his reign upon "the THRONE of his father David;" of whose "kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke 1 : 32, 33.)

But in connection with the *sign* spoken of, our Lord gives some interesting details, to which we respectfully invite the attention of our postmillenarian brethren. Matt. 24 : 15-22: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, *spoken of by Daniel the prophet*, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth let him understand :) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains, etc. For *then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time*, NO, NOR EVER SHALL BE. And except those days should be shortened, there should *no flesh* be saved: but for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened."

Our postmillenarian brethren apply this passage to the *destruction of Jerusalem*; but however applicable to the straits of the Jews at that calamity some of its terms are thought to be, we think it demonstrable that the passage does not thus apply at all. And the reason is because our Lord, intimating that we must

*read* Daniel in connection with his own prophecy, quotes his words which describe the time of the DELIVERANCE of his people, not of their national overthrow. This is clear as the sun. Dan. 12 : 1 : "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people : and *there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time*, (almost the very words quoted by Christ, in order :) AND AT THAT TIME THY PEOPLE SHALL BE DELIVERED, every one that shall be found in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust shall awake, some (these) to everlasting life, and some (those) to shame and everlasting contempt."

Now it is surely quite clear, that our Lord makes use of a prophecy which describes an *unparalleled* tribulation to befall Daniel's people ; and that the result of it to them should be DELIVERANCE, not *destruction*. But the sacking of Jerusalem was destruction, and not deliverance ; therefore the prophecy as used by Christ did not apply to that event. It is impossible thus to apply it without implicating him as an interpreter. Does it not speak of a time of trouble unequalled by any that had preceded it, and does it not say that *at that time* Daniel's people shall be DELIVERED ? Could Christ then apply it as descriptive of a time when eleven hundred thousand of them were destroyed in the most miserable manner, and the remnant sent, like Cain, to be esteemed in their exile as the vagabonds of the earth ? If this tribulation, *unequalled* in the whole previous history of the world, took place eighteen centuries ago, when Jerusalem was destroyed,



and should never afterward be equalled, how could DANIEL speak of a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, and say that *at that time his people shall be delivered?* We ask that this may be fairly looked at. How could CHRIST speak of the destruction by Titus with his Roman legions in the descriptive language, "such as was not since the beginning of the world *to this time*, NO, NOR EVER SHALL BE"! when that event should not occur for some forty years after? Will our postmillenarian brethren explain? Is it not apparent that they place Daniel and Christ hopelessly at variance? There is no doubt that both speak of the *same* unequalled tribulation. We see no way of getting out of this dilemma. *Either Christ did not fairly quote Daniel if he applied the prophecy to the destruction of Jerusalem; or if he did, then Daniel was a false prophet in this instance.* Now, we are sure that our brethren abhor any imputation of this kind as intensely as they can; but that does not get them out of the dilemma. We think that the prophecy therefore is not yet fulfilled, and we prove it by the sequel of our Lord's discourse.

"Then (at this future time of unequalled tribulation) if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the

west ; so shall the *coming* of the SON OF MAN be.' Did he speak here of his Manhood or of his Godhead? Doubtless of the former. Is it usual in the Scriptures to speak of the *spiritual* coming of a man? We may indeed speak of the providential coming of a man, but that always implies his *personal presence*. Did, then, the "Son of Man" personally come at the destruction of Jerusalem? He certainly did not, nor has he yet appeared. *When* then is the coming of the Son of Man to take place? His own words show that this coming can not be either *spiritual* or *providential* apart from his personal presence. "IMMEDIATELY AFTER *the tribulation of those days* shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken : and THEN shall appear the SIGN of the Son of Man in heaven : and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." This is the complete answer to the second question.

An amusing blunder has been gravely transmitted from commentator to commentator, which it may not be amiss here to notice. So intent are they upon making this prophecy of Christ applicable to, and fulfilled by the destruction of Jerusalem, that they tell us how minutely it delineates the progress of the Roman armies. "As the lightning cometh out of the *east*, and shineth even unto the *west*, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be." Bishop Pierce says, professing to gain his information from Josephus, "From his account it may be observed that the Roman army entered into Judea

on the *east* side of it, and carried on their conquests *westward*; as if not only the extensiveness of the ruin but the very *route* which the army would take was intended in the comparison of the lightning coming out of the *east* and shining even unto the *west*." (Jortin, vol. i. p. 41.) Bishop Newton copied this representation from Pierce. Clarke, Scott, Watson, Whitby, Benson, and others, all give this exposition of Pierce. Strange as it may seem, *it is all pure fiction*. *Not a word of truth in it!* Josephus shows *directly the contrary*, that the Roman armies entered Palestine from the *north*; and after long delay approached Jerusalem from the *north, west, and south*; but *not from the east*. And instead of coming with the rapidity of lightning, they were very slow! What is such exposition worth?

If the tribulation spoken of was the sacking of Jerusalem, then the words of Christ, *immediately after the tribulation of those days*, require that the aforesaid phenomena should have taken place; but no such things appeared at all, and no circumstances to which the language could be even *figuratively* applied. Therefore, the destruction of Jerusalem was not the tribulation at all. There is no way of getting clear of this but by representing our Saviour, as postmillenarians do, in the attitude of a prophet rapt in *ecstasy*, and giving forth the predictions of future events without regard to order, time, or place; just as an astronomer might name the stars without respect to distance or magnitude. But this is not only a pure assumption, but utterly unwarrantable by the well-known usage of Christ. His disciples came to him to ask information. They presented two plain questions, the latter of which related to the sign of his

coming. On the former he spoke plainly without any *double* meaning. On the latter he spoke as plainly from the prophecy of Daniel, and enlarged upon it; and then told them what should immediately follow the tribulation, and then the SIGN of his coming, which was the gist of their question, should appear in the heavens. Now, to impute any thing like *double entendre* to the instructions of our Lord on this occasion, when to his inquiring disciples they had been so free from it on all others, is not worthy of our piety or intelligence. It certainly appears like doing him a great wrong; and since his prophetic discourse is a continuous one, without involution, without any breaks, and as capable of a chronologically regular exposition as any other in Scripture; and when we assign to the prophecy of Daniel, which he uses, its proper application, nothing can be more evident than the fact, that the mistake of its application, and the spiritualizing process which makes Christ's *παρουσία* not to mean *παρουσία* at all, but something else, have brought inextricable confusion into the common exegesis of Matt. 24.

It is apparent that our Lord in this discourse *spans the whole time* between his two personal comings. But he utters not one word of comfort or encouragement to cheer the prospects or animate the spirits of his desponding disciples, derived from the doctrine of our *intervening* millennium, in this prophetic synopsis of the history of his Church; nor does he say a word about his *delay* for a thousand years or more; nor does he utter a word about his spiritual kingdom, into which his reign "upon the THRONE of his Father David" has been frittered away, nor give any intimation of the

establishment of his kingdom in any manner. What is the inference? Irresistibly this: His kingdom will not be set up until he comes the second time to do it, after this tribulation is passed.

We proceed now further to prove this point, by a passage which will throw some light on the "tribulation" of Daniel.

(2.) Zech. 14 : 1-5 : "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and the spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. THEN shall the LORD go forth and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. *And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives*, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: AND THE LORD THY GOD SHALL COME, AND ALL THE SAINTS WITH THEE." (See 1 Thess. 4:14-16.)

We should exceedingly like to see an *exposition* of this prophecy by those who contend for the spiritual coming of our Lord. Jesus tells us, "When the Son of Man shall come, THEN shall he sit upon the throne



of his glory." Paul speaks of "the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead *at his appearing and his kingdom.*" Then shall he possess "*the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven;*" then "ALL KINGS shall fall down before him, and ALL NATIONS shall worship before him." Then the pæan of praise at his coronation shall fill the heavens. "The kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." Then the day of millennial bliss shall encircle the world with the radiance of its glory, and the pictures of the seraphic Isaiah shall become living realities, to beautify the whole earth redeemed from the curse (Rom. 7: 19, 23) for a *thousand years*; and "then cometh the *end*, when he shall have *delivered up* the kingdom to God, even the Father;" "when the Son also himself shall be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

"Oh! that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence, as when the melting fire burneth, the fire that causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence! For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him."

"My soul, wait thou only, *only*, ONLY upon God; for my expectation is from him."

It is now quite apparent, we think, that but one time of tribulation is spoken of by our Lord in Matt. 24;

that this is unparalleled in the history of the world; that this tribulation is a matter of prophecy, for the understanding of which, *as to the time of its occurrence*, Christ refers us to Daniel. It is self-evident from Daniel that when this tribulation takes place, the Jews are DELIVERED, not destroyed; it is also clear that when Titus sacked Jerusalem and dispersed the nation of Israel, this event, which was to them "the beginning of sorrows," could not have been, by the terms of the prophecy, the tribulation referred to; for Daniel's people were not delivered. To put this beyond all doubt, Christ says, "*Immediately after the tribulation of those days*," the SIGN of his own personal coming shall be seen in the heavens. Now, as the time spoken of confessedly spans the whole period from his first to his second personal presence, during which he is in the "far country," and consequently has not yet set up his kingdom, we maintain our position is demonstrated; because his coming and his kingdom, as we have proved, synchronize in manifestation. The Word of God alone, fairly interpreted, must settle this point; and we maintain that such is its precision in terms, construction of sentences, and plainness of instruction, upon the supposition that the Holy Ghost meant to teach just what we affirm he does teach upon this subject, no combinations of language could more happily be adapted to his purpose. The manifestation of this kingdom, therefore, demonstrably, will not be made until Israel will say, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord."

(3.) Another proof, Isa. 2:2-4: "And it shall come to pass in *the last days*, that the mountain of the Lord's

house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it."

The rest of the passage clearly proves that this shall be fulfilled at the time of the millennium. In the symbolic language of prophecy, say postmillenarians, "a mountain" denotes a kingdom. If so, the mountain of Moab means the kingdom of Moab. Is it not then plain that the same symbolic significance must be assigned to the same word throughout this passage? If the "mountains" mean literal kingdoms upon the earth, must not the mountain of the Lord's house mean a literal kingdom also similarly established? If, however, it mean, as postmillenarians affirm, "the Church of God," then surely the other "mountains" must mean the "synagogues of Satan." But this is contrary to symbolic representation; therefore the passage teaches that "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever" upon "the throne of his father David; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Rev. 11:15; Luke 1:33.)

(4.) Luke 21:24, compared with Acts 3:20, 21: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." "He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive UNTIL the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Now at the time of millennial bliss, Jerusalem is represented as rescued from her desolations, and restored, (Isa. 2:2-4; 65:18, 19; 66:12;) therefore,

since she is to lie waste *until* the times of the Gentiles be exhausted, no millennium shall be realized during those times. But the restoration of Israel will be at least among "the restitution of all things" spoken of by Peter; hence, when the times of the Gentiles run out, the times of restitution begin. The close of the one and the opening of the other is the hour of Christ's personal coming. It makes no matter whether the word translated *times* be taken in the plural, or by an enallage of number, means the singular. The all-important word in this passage is the adverb of time. It does not say that our Lord shall be held by heaven until all things be restored; for then, if this world is to be burnt up and destroyed, he would never come: but *until* the times of restoration. Now restoration completed is one thing, and restoration begun is another. Is it not then clear as sunlight that the meaning of the words, "whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution," is, not until those times *expire*, but until they *begin*? But we are told that of these times "God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Vs. 24: "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of those days." Upon what points then do the prophets agree, as specifically illustrating our text? We can only give a sample. Read 2 Sam. 7:16; Isa. 11:10, 12; and especially notice that "in *that day* the Lord shall set his hand AGAIN THE SECOND TIME to recover the remnant of his people; and he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble *the outcasts of Israel, and gather*

*together the dispersed of Judah from THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH.* (Jer. 23 : 3 ; Ezek. 37 : 11 to end.)

The times of restitution, as we learn from the prophets to whom we are referred, have respect not to all things indefinitely, but first to the restoration of Israel and then to all concomitant and consequential things which respect the MANIFESTATION OF THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

There is no truth more precious to us than the spiritual reign of Christ, by which we mean his sovereignty over the hearts of his people. His providential rule is readily admitted, for all power in heaven and on earth is his. But his *spiritual* reign is now and here ; as it has been from his ascension, so it will be until his coming, a reign of gospel principles. If we are borne out by the aforesaid rules in our expositions of the passages to which we have appealed in defense of our view of the KINGDOM OF CHRIST, then it must be the true one. If not, it can be easily shown. A thousand questions, avowedly containing as many difficulties, are impertinent until THIS POINT is disposed of. If it be shown that our principle of interpretation is false, there will be no need of pressing difficulties. If it can not be shown by those who urge them, consistency demands that they accept our exposition ; and then all these difficulties become their own, and they have as much interest in answering them as we possibly can have. We maintain that we have made out fairly, fully, satisfactorily, by the aforesaid rules, this proposition : THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST AND HIS PERSONAL COMING MUST BE PREMILLENNIAL, according to the Scriptures.



We commend the disquisition of Olshausen to the consideration of all who take an interest in this subject. (Vol. i. pp. 113-124.) He says:

“The Revelation teaches (agreeing perfectly with the statements of our Lord and the apostles) that a period will come in which the spirit of Jesus Christ shall not only prevail in secret, as heretofore, but gain the victory externally, and found a kingdom of peace and righteousness upon the earth. With the arrival of the reign of peace, there will be connected, on the one hand, the appearance of Jesus Christ and a resurrection of many saints; and on the other, a previous mighty struggle on the part of evil. The principal idea is, the perfect return of the supremacy of good, the restoration of the lost Paradise to earth which has been laid waste by sin. Millions desire this most earnestly, hope and pray for it even, without imagining that it is the very doctrine which they think themselves bound to oppose; or at least unable to admit without deviating from correct belief. Even the excellent Reformers had but an imperfect knowledge of this doctrine, though it is as simple as sublime; and for this reason, in a good measure, that they saw around them senseless fanatics who dishonored the Gospel, and caused unspeakable injury by the grossest misconstructions and perversions of this doctrine.”

#### OBJECTIONS.

We proceed now to answer the chief objections under this head.

*First Objection.* “Christ said to Pilate, ‘My kingdom is not of this world;’ therefore the millenarian doc-

trine is not true, because it contradicts the declaration of Christ."

*Answer.* 1st. It does not contradict his declaration, but is perfectly in keeping with it. *Denial* on this point is at least as good as *assertion*.

2d. Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this *κοσμος*, physical world." (John 18 : 36.) But he also said of his disciples, "Ye are not of the world, *κοσμος*." (John 15 : 19.) The two propositions are identical. Now, if the first one proves that Christ's kingdom shall never be literally on the earth, then the second proves that the disciples to whom he addressed these words were not then literally on the earth, because neither were of the *κοσμος*. This clearly shows the imbecility of the objection. On the other hand, if it be true that while the disciples "were not of this world," (John 17 : 16,) they might remain *in* it, (John 17 : 25;) it is also true, that the *kingdom* is not of this world, and yet shall be in it; for what may be said of Christ and his disciples, can also be said of his kingdom. The import of the passage forming the basis of this objection is transparent. Christ's kingdom, in its origin, form, spirit, economy, nature, and object, is not in any of these respects like the kingdoms of the earth, such as Cæsar's. This objection therefore makes nothing against our argument, which affirms the truth of the anticipation of the saints who are now disembodied. Rev. 5 : 10 : "WE SHALL REIGN ON THE EARTH."

*Second Objection.* "The theory is evidently Jewish in its origin and Jewish in its tendency," and "agrees with the Jewish notion of a temporal Messiah."

*Answer.* Christ said, "Salvation is of the Jews."

He was himself a Jew, and so were his first disciples. If then the theory of his kingdom, as taught by premillennialists, should be rejected for the reason of its Jewish origin and original Jewish supporters, precisely for the same reason should the theory of salvation be rejected. We prove what Christ with his apostles admitted, that the Jews were right respecting the fact and place of Christ's kingdom, but they were wrong as to the theory, nature, circumstances, time, and aim.

*Third Objection.* "It destroys the analogy between the Aaronic High Priest and the priestly office of Christ, arresting his intercessory work by bringing him down to earth to reign in his humanity."

*Answer.* The Aaronic High Priest went into the Holy of holies to make intercession for the people for whom he had previously made sacrifice; and he then in due time *returned* to them, in confirmation of the fact that his work was accomplished. So our High Priest, having sacrificed himself, went into heaven, the true Holy of holies, to make intercession, (see Heb. 9 : 7-12, 23;) and to "*appear* in the presence of God for us." He must then *return* to the place of his sacrifice not only in confirmation of the fact that all his work is done, but to sit down as a "Priest upon his throne;" for he was a Priest "after the order of Melchizedek," and not after the order of Aaron, who had no throne. Now as the Priestly and Kingly offices of Melchizedek were exercised in the *same* sphere, so Christ must be literally a king where he was literally a priest. Postmillenarianism is therefore the theory which destroys the analogy spoken of in the objection, because it teaches that the people at death individually go into the inner tem-

ple after the intercessor, and do not *wait* for the coming out of the High Priest. But we are taught that we must "*wait* for his Son from heaven." (1 Thess. 1 : 10.) Besides, this objection reflects upon God himself, who *swore* unto David that he would raise up Christ to sit on David's throne *according to the flesh*. (Acts 2 : 29, 30.) But if this can not be done without arresting his intercession, then the intercession must be arrested or the oath dishonored. Which will the objector's faith prefer?

*Fourth Objection.* "The kingdom of Christ has already come. He has sat upon the throne of his father David ever since his ascension. (Acts 2 : 29-36; 3 : 13-15; 4 : 26, 28; 5 : 29-31; Heb. 10 : 12, 13; Rev. 3 : 7-12.)"—*Hodge's Outlines*.

*Answer.* This is a great array of proof, but the author was wise enough not to *quote* the passages indicated; for, strange as it may seem, not one of them can be tortured into the vindication of this absurdity. According to the objection, David's throne must be in heaven; and not only so, but David himself must be God Almighty! For Christ is now sat down upon the throne of his Father. (Rev. 3 : 21.) Alas! to what straits is this theory reduced, when in its desperateness it urges such a vast absurdity, and sticks to it, in hopes that its very pertinacity shall at least turn to its own credit.

Again, if the kingdom of Christ has already come, *the will of God is done on earth as it is in heaven*; the first part of the Lord's prayer has thus been answered, and it must be superseded by praise. We hardly think,

that the aspect of the world will justify the assertion of the objector.

*Fifth Objection.* "It teaches a threefold coming of Christ, whereas the Scriptures teach that he will come but twice."

*Answer.* We deny this. Christ at the commencement of the millennium, will "come the second time without sin unto salvation." We do not read that he will *go away again*. On the other hand, postmillenarians are the only ones, that we ever heard of, who teach a threefold coming,\* which is, we own, an erroneous view. They say that he came personally and suffered, that he will come spiritually and reign, and that he will come personally and judge; each of these three comings being equally *real*!

*Sixth Objection.* "The kingdom of Christ is *spiritual*. (Matt. 13: 11-44; John 18: 36; Rom. 14: 17.)"

*Answer.* Words are signs of ideas. Although we know what the term *spiritual* means, as employed in the Scriptures, we are not sure that we can tell what is meant by a *spiritual kingdom*, the term never being used in this connection either by sacred or profane authors. A spiritual man, means a man whose heart is set upon divine realities, whose mind loves to dwell in the realm of religious thought, and whose conduct is in agreement with his inclination; but all this does not interfere with the materiality of his existence and experience, nor make it incongruous that he should live upon the earth. Now, should twenty millions of such men exist, under a government whose law should be

\* "There is a *threefold* coming of Christ spoken of in the New Testament."—BURKITT.



the great law of love, and the enactments of the Bible their guide, and whose officers should execute their duties in righteousness, while the whole nation should love *righteousness*, live in purity and *peace*, rejoicing in the *Holy Ghost*; would not such a kingdom be a spiritual kingdom? If so, then such a description would not be antagonistic to the materiality of its existence on earth; it would be both *spiritual* and *material*; and when the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, we think the great Christocracy, with Christ as king, having subdued the earth, will be just such a glorious realization, when "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" shall be the great characteristics of the human family. If wrong in this, can any one tell us what a spiritual kingdom is? Who will define it? Will it be *visible* or *invisible*? If the former, then we assert that as there never has been on earth a visible kingdom without a visible king, and as the Scriptures represent that, when he comes, Christ shall be visible, and shall occupy a throne, and reign over the nations in a kingdom that shall have no end, his kingdom must be *material* as well as *spiritual*; and there is not a text in the Bible opposed to this idea; but, on the contrary, all the sacred writers harmonize in this view, and no other one can possibly be in agreement with the general Biblical idea of the kingdom of Christ. If the latter, we want some show of proof. The passages quoted in the objection are in perfect harmony with our view, and we offer them as evidence of its correctness.

If we understand the import of the phrase intended to explain the nature of Christ's kingdom, it means

nothing more than the world's acceptance of the religion of Christ, and the establishment of the Church in every part of it, all people becoming savingly acquainted with the truth by the ordinary operations of the means of grace rendered universally efficient for righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. But while this will undoubtedly be true, it is a DENIAL of the existence of a kingdom of Christ on earth, for the administration will be by the *Holy Spirit*, and not by the Son in the execution of his kingly office, contrary to the Scriptures. (Luke 19 : 12-27.)

*Seventh Objection.* "The kingdom of God is within us, and means the reign of Christ in the hearts of God's people. Luke 17 : 20, 21 : 'And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Neither shall they say Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.'"

*Answer.* 1st. It is true that Christ reigns in the hearts of all his people. This, however, is an invisible reign; it has always been so; but if that fact exhaust the meaning of the kingdom spoken of, it is idle to talk of its coming at all, for it has never been absent from the earth, since God has always had a seed to serve him. But the question is not now about the *reign* or sovereignty of Christ, but about the REALM of his kingdom. Evidently the Pharisees referred to the former. The point of their question was as to the time *when* the reign of God should commence; that is, the reign of the Messiah. It was not his purpose to enlighten them on this point, when he kept his own disciples in the

dark respecting it; but the import of his words was this: The reign of the Messiah is not to be established with such a parade as you are looking for; nor shall people exclaim, Lo the parade here! or, lo there! for the *reign* of the Messiah is now in the midst of your nation. In other words, he affirmed that the Messiah had come, and was even then invested with sovereignty over the hearts of his true followers, and this was at that hour an actual fact in the midst of their nation. This text, therefore, has no reference to the real point in dispute. (See the Essay on import of the word Kingdom.)

2d. If this text be claimed as a proof that the kingdom of God is in the hearts of the people, then the objector must admit that these Pharisees were true believers and the friends of Christ! for if this kingdom was within *them*, the king must have been the object of their highest regard.

*Eighth Objection.* "Christ said to his disciples, (Matt. 16:28:) 'Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.' But he has not yet come literally in his kingdom, and the apostles to whom the aforesaid promise was made are all long since dead; therefore the coming of Christ in his kingdom can not be understood in a literal sense, but must be figuratively interpreted."

*Answer.* The promise was, that some of the disciples should actually "SEE the Son of Man coming in his kingdom;" or, as Mark has it, "the kingdom of God come with power;" or, as Luke has it, "the kingdom of God,"

This was fulfilled by the wonderful scene on the mount of Transfiguration. It was a *real* manifestation of the regal glory of Christ; something *seen* as an outline of the nature, associations, and blessedness of that kingdom. Peter was one who saw it, and described it as follows, (2 Pet. 1:16, 17:) "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you *the power and coming* (that is, the powerful coming) of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were *eye-witnesses* of his *majesty*. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him *in the holy mount*." Peter thus defines this scene, as the *coming* of Christ; just as we define a picture by the name of the object or subject it represents.

These objections cover every thing of importance that has been urged against the doctrine of the Essay. We are quite willing now to submit the whole to the judgment of the candid reader, concluding with the following extract from AUBERLEN's admirable work on "Daniel and Revelation," p. 324, republished, Andover:

"It will be useful to consider all these points carefully, since the doctrine of the millennial kingdom is sadly misrepresented and neglected. And very unjustly. For this doctrine does not rest, as is often thought, upon an isolated passage in the Apocalypse, but the whole prophecy of the Old Covenant can not be rightly understood without it." (Mark this.)

“And with regard to the New Testament, the fundamental idea of the doctrine of Christ, in which is concentrated the sum and substance of Messianic prophecy, the idea of the kingdom of God indicates, by its very name, its close relation to the doctrine now under consideration. The general view on this subject is, that the Lord Jesus preached an exclusively internal, moral, spiritual kingdom of God, in opposition to the external and carnal Messianic expectations of the Jewish people. But as the Jews at the time of our Saviour had fallen into a materialistic extreme, so the current view of our day runs into the opposite spiritualistic extreme. It is true that it was necessary for our Lord to oppose the carnal expectations of the nation, and to insist, with double emphasis, on the spiritual internal conditions of partaking in the kingdom, namely, repentance and faith. But he by no means dissolves the kingdom into mere inwardness; but it is to him, as Schmidt expresses it, the divine order of things relates, which is realized by him, the Messiah, and which develops itself from within outwardly. Thus the kingdom of God has different periods; it is come in Christ, (Matt. 12 : 28;) it spreads in the world by internal, spiritual, hidden processes, (Matt. 13 : 33;) but as a kingdom, in the strict sense of the word, in royal glory, it shall only come with the *Parousia* of Christ, (Luke 19 : 11, 12, 15;) even as we are, according to Christ’s command, to pray, even now, day after day, Thy kingdom come. (Matt. 6 : 10.) And hereby is not meant the eternal blessedness after final judgment, which is indeed the last and perfect consummation of the kingdom, (Matt. 25 : 34;) but, anterior to that



event, it shall come as an earthly, Jewish, although not carnal, kingdom of glory. Thus the prophets described it, and Jesus does in no way contradict them, but, on the contrary, presupposing their prophecies, his own prophecies start from them. (Matt. 19 : 28 ; Acts 1 : 6-8.) Jesus was, consequently, as all prophets and apostles were, a Chiliast."

W. R. G.

## ESSAY IX.

### THE PLACE OF THE KINGDOM.

OUR Lord, when he comes again to establish his everlasting kingdom, (2 Pet. 1 : 11 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 1,) will institute it in our renovated world. For the confirmation of this proposition, we submit the following arguments :

I. There is an absolute silence of Scripture as to any other world in which the Redeemer is to reign. Often is his second advent foretold ; often is his kingly glory described in that great day ; but nowhere is it written that he will then reign in some other world, distant from the one in which he once suffered. That he will come the second time to the earth, with all his saints, is clearly foretold, 1 Thess. 3 : 13 ; Zech. 14 : 3-5 ; that he will, after that epoch, ever leave our world, in order to take the saints away to heaven and reign with them there, is nowhere declared in the sacred Scriptures. Heaven is and will be the abode of disembodied saints until our Redeemer comes again, but no longer. From that time onward to the everlasting ages, the Word of God is perfectly silent as to any other place but the earth, in which Christ is to reign in righteousness.

II. That the earth will be the scene of our Lord's everlasting reign, is clearly and copiously revealed in

Scripture. Take the following as specimens of these predictions :

1. He will reign *on the throne of David*. (2 Sam. 7 : 12-29.) Here the Lord promises with respect to David's seed, that he "*will establish the throne of his kingdom forever*;" which refers especially to the Messiah, who was a descendant of David as to his human nature, and of the tribe of Judah. (Rom. 1 : 3 ; Heb. 7 : 14.)

Again it is written, Isa. 9 : 6-7 : "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given : and the government shall be upon his shoulder : and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Father of Eternity, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Here the person of the king is portrayed in such a way that mistake is impossible to any honest mind, in reference to him. He is the God-Man, Christ Jesus. Moreover, it is foretold with the same perspicuity that he will reign as the Righteous King on David's throne forever. But how can this be fulfilled, except he shall establish his dominion in our world ?

Jer. 23 : 5-6 : "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely ; and this is the name whereby he shall be called, Jehovah our

Righteousness." The king here spoken of is a descendant of David, and yet Jehovah, "the root and the offspring of David;" the place where he is to execute judgment and justice is not heaven, but *the earth*: then Judah shall be saved and Israel dwell safely; which did not occur at his first coming, for since the destruction of Jerusalem until now, the Jews have been outcasts and wanderers among the nations. Christ's reign on earth, and over restored Israel, (3-4 vs. 7-8 vs.,) therefore, is to be fulfilled at his second coming.

Luke 1 : 31-33 : " And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. This one shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give to him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Here the same king, and the same kingdom over the same people, which the fore-cited prophets speak of, is described, and that in words too plain for evasion, too clear for exposition.

Now, "what shall we say to these things?" That there is obscurity in the predictions quoted? Who believes it? Historical narrative is not more lucid and unambiguous than these and kindred prophecies. Will any venture to affirm that Christ, in heaven, now sits on the throne of David? If so, are they prepared to admit that the disembodied spirit of David is God the Father? (Mark 16 : 19.) Can the throne of David on earth be the throne of the Almighty in heaven?

2. There are predictions which *expressly declare that the earth* is to be the place of Christ's reign. (Ps. 96, 97, and 98.) In these Psalms the reign of Jehovah

Jesus over our world is set forth with sublime perspicuity. "*Make a joyful noise unto Jehovah, all the earth; make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. . . . Make a joyful noise before Jehovah, the King. Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together before Jehovah; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the peoples with equity.*" It is self-evident that the judgment here predicted is not judicial process and condemnation simply, but the righteous and beneficent government of men on earth.

While reading the seventy-second Psalm, we involuntarily say, "A greater than Solomon is here;" the King here spoken of is our blessed Saviour. "In his days" (when he reigns) "shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth." "*They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.*" "*He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.*" "*Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.*" Is it possible to combine any forms of speech that could more unequivocally declare the perpetuity of our Redeemer's kingdom on earth?

Dan. 7: "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed." In this chapter we are taught that Christ will, at his second coming, establish his kingdom *on earth*; for "*all peo-*



*ple, nations, and languages*" are expressions which describe men living on earth, not the inhabitants of "the high and holy place." This is put beyond intelligent doubt by the subsequent explanation: "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." NOW, THE KINGDOM UNDER THE WHOLE HEAVEN, or atmosphere, can mean nothing but THE KINGDOM ON EARTH. When Paul says that "the Gospel was preached in all the creation *that is under the heaven*," or atmosphere, he means, not Heaven, not Jupiter, not Saturn, but the earth, and that alone. (Col. 1 : 23. Gr.) "There is no new thing *under the sun*," says Solomon. What would be thought of an interpreter who should affirm the sense to be that every thing is old and stale in *heaven*?

Rev. 11 : 15 : "*The kingdoms of the world have become (the kingdoms) of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.*" [The manuscripts A, B, C, have the word "kingdom" in the singular number; but either way the sense is the same.] Here it is foretold that Jesus, the Christ of God, (Ps. 2 : 2,) will have the empire or government of our world, and that to all eternity. When, or from what epoch? When God shall reward his risen saints, and hurl all despots from the earth, (18 v. ;) that is, at our Lord's second coming.

3. Jesus Christ, "the King of kings and Lord of lords," "the Prince of the kings of the earth," will

reign in our *renovated* world. This is revealed in the following passages :

Rom. 8 : 17-23 : " But if children, then heirs ; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ ; since we suffer with him, to the end that we may also be glorified together. For I am persuaded that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be manifested to us. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God ; for the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who subjected it—in hope ; because even the creation itself shall be set free from the bondage of corruption, when the children of God obtain their glorious freedom. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only, [the whole creation,] but even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body." (*Eis*, in 21 v., means *up to, at, in the time of, or when* ; as in Matt. 12 : 41 ; 1 Thess. 4 : 15.)

Here the apostle tells us that God's children and heirs are also joint-heirs with Christ ; that their present sufferings in the world where their Redeemer likewise suffered, are intended to prepare them for their future glorification with him on earth ; and that, from this point of view, their present sufferings are as nothing when compared with the glory that shall be revealed or manifested to them. He adds, however, that the honor or glory which they shall possess with Christ will be in our world, not as it now is, burdened with the curse occasioned by man's sin, but when set

free from that curse; and that the epoch of this deliverance of the earth, with the glorious freedom of God's children, will be when the renewed obtain the redemption of the body; that is, at our Lord's second coming. In other words, *it is here revealed that the risen saints shall be glorified with Christ in the renovated earth, their heritage.* (Matt. 5 : 5.)

No other interpretation is tenable; for *the creation*, or creature, spoken of by the apostle can not mean the fallen angels, inasmuch as there is not even the darkest hint anywhere given of their deliverance from penal evils: neither can it refer to the angels that have never sinned, since no curse rests on them: nor can it designate those men who live and die in their sins during this present dispensation, or who so lived and died in preceding ages; for "he that believeth not shall be condemned," and "as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." What, then, can it signify but our world? Compare Mark 10 : 6; 13 : 19; Col. 1 : 23; 2 Pet. 3 : 4. [The aspirated reading, equivalent to "*Even this creation,*" is found in B, or the Vatican manuscript, as edited by Cardinal Mai. But the translation, "*Even the creation itself,*" leaves the sense unchanged.] Moreover, what can the words, "*the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption,*" mean, if they do not foretell the renovation of our world, or its restoration to that state in which it was when "God saw every thing that he had made, and behold, it was very good"? The earth, then, in its renovated state, will be the scene of Christ's reign, the place in which

he shall be glorified as the Lord of all, and in which they who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, and patiently suffer, shall reign with him. (2 Tim. 2 : 12.)

2 Pet. 3 : 13 : “ *Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*” Here the apostle explicitly declares that the conflagration foretold in the preceding context would end, not in the destruction of our world, but in its renovation, or restoration. For he does not say we expect another heavens and another earth, but *new*, that is, renewed ; the substance remaining, but the qualities or properties changed for the better.

To maintain that the words “ *new heavens and a new earth* ” mean heaven, as used in the ordinary religious dialect, is, in the language of Dr. McClelland, “ to bring a sense to Scripture, not to take one *from* it.” Heaven, the present home of departed saints, is never spoken of in Scripture by the name earth, with descriptive adjectives, such as old and new. A new earth with a new atmosphere, is the evident meaning. In this our renovated world, “ *righteousness dwells.*” Now, righteousness is a quality of the mind, and has no existence apart from beings who are intelligent ; it is unquestionably a metonymy of the quality for the persons in whom the quality exists ; “ righteousness ” for the righteous, as “ the circumcision ” for the circumcised. Our renovated world, then, is to be the permanent dwelling-place or home of the righteous. When, or from what epoch ? At the personal coming of our Lord, as is evident from the whole preceding context, 3 : 1-12. (Compare 2 Pet. 1 : 11-16, and the two last

chapters of Isaiah, which contain the promise alluded to by the apostle.) That Christ will reign in the renovated earth, is taught also in Matt. 19 : 28 : Acts 3 : 19-21.

Thus have we shown that our renovated world at our Lord's second coming, will be the PLACE *of his everlasting reign* ; and, incidentally, that his risen saints shall reign with him. "To him be the glory both now and forever."

" Oh ! for a world in principle as chaste  
As this is gross and selfish !  
Come then, and, added to thy many crowns,  
Receive yet one, the crown of all the earth,  
Thou who alone art worthy !"

#### OBJECTIONS.

I. ANTIMILLENARIANS, in substance, say that the predictions relative to Christ's sitting on the throne of David can not be strictly understood, but should be allegorically interpreted. D. Brown, for instance, in his work on Christ's Second Coming, contends that *Christ now sits on the throne of David* ; or that the predictions relating to that, are already fulfilled and fulfilling ; David's throne, and Christ sitting on it, meaning nothing more than "the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, as the fruit of David's loins, to the right hand of power ;" and the effusion of the Spirit by Christ as Lord from the day of Pentecost until now : or the conversion, sanctification, and government of the Church, thus promoted by Christ in heaven. This, and this only, he boldly affirms to be meant by our Saviour's sitting on the throne of David.



He tries to prove it from various passages; and, first, from Acts 2 : 29-36. But there Peter's main design is to show that Jesus was the Christ. After quoting from the 16th Psalm, he proves that David can not be meant by the sacred writer, since David had not, with body and soul united, ascended into the heavens; but that the prophet refers to the Messiah, which was fulfilled in Jesus, raised from the dead and exalted in heaven.

Our Saviour, seated at God's right hand, unquestionably sends the Holy Spirit, and is the Head and Lord of the Church; but is *this* the meaning of the words, "Knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him," (David,) "that of the fruit of his loins, as to the flesh, *he would raise up Christ, to sit upon his*" (David's) "*throne*"? Peter, in this verse, incidentally alludes to God's immutable decree, that the Messiah, as David's son, should, without fail, appear as king and sit on David's throne. The words "*would raise up Christ,*" in this verse, Brown seems to understand of his resurrection from the dead; whereas it refers to *his future appearance* as King on earth. Compare Acts 3 : 22, "A prophet *shall* the Lord your God *raise up* to you:" cause to exist, make to appear as a prophet, on earth. 3 : 26 : "Unto you first, God, *having raised up* his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you:" caused him to appear as the prophet among you. (7 : 37.) 13 : 33 : "The promise made to our fathers God hath fulfilled to us their children, *in that he raised up Jesus,*" or, *by raising up Jesus* : causing him to appear among us. Since these explanatory remarks were written, we have consulted J. A. Alexander on the Acts, and find that he explains in

the same manner, so far as the meaning of the word is concerned. See also 1 Kings 14 : 14 ; Judg. 2 : 16 ; Ex. 9 : 16 : "For this end *have I raised thee up,*" etc. : caused thee to exist, and appear as king in Egypt. The meaning of Acts 2 : 30, then, is clear : Knowing that God's immutable purpose is to cause Messiah, the Son of David, hereafter to appear on earth, and sit on David's throne. David never exercised as king any dominion in heaven, but reigned over Israel on earth ; and his great descendant, Christ, does not succeed to David's dominion by his session at the right hand of God in heaven. David was never Lord of the Church, but Christ is ; this, therefore, can not be intended by sitting on David's throne.

Brown also cites Zech. 6 : 12, 13 and Rev. 5 : 6. But who denies that Christ is Priest as well as king ? Who denies that he now makes intercession in heaven ? But does it follow from this that he will never act as Priest on earth hereafter ? Surely not. The Messiah will be Prophet, Priest, and King to all eternity. Does it follow from this that to "*sit on David's throne*" means to *exercise the priestly office* ? Who can believe it ? He is to be a successor of David *as king*, not as priest.

Brown next cites Rev. 3 : 7, 8, 12 : "These things saith *he that hath the key of David,*" etc., and thence, from a comparison with Isa. 22 : 22, concludes that the throne of David, and the key of his house, or palace, mean the same thing ; and that they both signify Christ's present government over the Church. Now, while he gives an appearance of plausibility to his mode of explaining the passage, he has not demon-

strated it to be the only true interpretation. For, first, it is by no means certain that "the key of *David*" is the genuine text. (Here we agree with D. N. Lord, who, in his "Literary and Theological Journal," has examined and refuted the work of Brown, before mentioned.) Internal evidence is decidedly against it. In the epistles to the seven churches, Christ constantly describes himself by some title taken from Rev. 1 : 10-18. And it is unaccountable to suppose that he would omit such a title in his epistle to the church of Philadelphia alone. It seems morally certain that some transcriber, by accident or design, put "the key of David" in the margin, falsely supposing a reference to Isa. 22 : 22. In this way the origin of the mistake is evident. We consider this the true reading: "He who hath the key of *Hades*," (Rev. 1 : 18;) that is, He who admits believers into Paradise and unbelievers into Tartarus. External evidence is also not wanting; for Andreas, who in the sixth century wrote a commentary on the Revelation, testifies that "the *key of Hades*, and not the key of David, was written in some manuscripts" in his possession. *The same reading* is also found in the *Coptic version*, made in the *third century*. (Tischendorf, *in loc.*)

Again, Isa. 22 : 22 refers to Eliakim as the chamberlain or steward of the house of David. As such he would, of course, admit or exclude visitors, have a general oversight of the household, and guard the treasures of the king. (Compare ver. 16.) But a king's steward and treasurer is not the king himself, nor necessarily his successor. Once more: What proof is there that the house, or palace, of David is a symbol

or representative of the Christian Church? Where is it so used in Scripture? And what congruity, to say nothing of reverence, can there be in representing Christ as a subordinate officer in a king's household, when he is the Great King himself? So evident it is that we should read, "These things saith he who is holy, he who is true, he who hath the key of Hades." (The other texts cited by Brown are so irrelevant that they require no remark.)

Christ now sits at the right hand of God in heaven. (Mark 16 : 19 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 22 ; Heb. 1 : 3.) But if, as Brown affirms, Christ now sits on the throne of David, then, as already said, the disembodied spirit of David must be God the Father, and the throne of the Almighty in heaven and that of David on earth must be the same thing! How supremely absurd! Yet who can deny the fairness of the logical inference?

Our Lord also sends forth from heaven this bugle-note to his militant church: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in *MY throne*, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in *HIS throne*." (Rev. 3 : 21.) Here our Lord makes a distinction between his own throne and that of the Father in heaven. And what can *Christ's throne* be, as distinguished from the Father's, except "the throne of David"—his throne on *earth*? This is confirmed from Rev. 2 : 26, 27: "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter are they shivered: even as I received from my Father." Will

there be any rebellious nations in heaven to subdue and destroy? (See Ps. 2 : 7-9.)

II. What a degradation to Christ, say some, to come from heaven and dwell in "a marble hovel in Jerusalem"! Indeed! Who is the best judge in this matter—man or God? The question is *not* what God ought to have revealed, according to our way of thinking, but what he has in fact revealed concerning it. That Jerusalem, or Mount Zion, will be the metropolis of the Great King is clearly revealed; as any one can see for himself by reading Jer. 31 : 38-40. There the prophet predicts that Jerusalem shall be built for Jehovah, for Jehovah Jesus, for his honor as the Great King; that every thing offensive or unbecoming shall be removed from its precincts; and he also foretells its everlasting continuance as such a city; and this, when Israel shall be restored to their own land, and exist on earth as a nation forever. (35-37 vs.; 30 : 17-19; 31 : 10-14. See also Micah 4 : 6-8; Zech. 14 : 9-11; Isa. 2 : 1-3; 24 : 23.) And it is expressly declared that this his residence shall be *glorious*, or in all respects becoming him as God in flesh. (Isa. 11 : 9, 10, with 12 : 6 and 24 : 23.)

"Where they mocked thy dying groan,  
King of nations, plant thy throne."

It is not necessary to suppose that "the King of kings and Lord of lords" will always confine his personal presence to the metropolis of the renovated earth. In the exercise of his royal authority he may visit other parts of his empire, and show much more abundantly his Theanthropic munificence and grace on earth



than he did at his first coming in Judea. And what absurdity is there in supposing that the judgment of the living nations by Christ will be in the countries which they occupy? (See Matt. 25 : 31, etc.)

III. "*The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb,*" etc. (Isa. 11 : 6-9 and 65 : 25.) "Jerome," says J. A. Alexander, "speaks of the Jews and some Judaizing Christians as believing that a literal change in the nature of wild beasts is here predicted. Most Christian writers, ancient and modern, explain the prophecy as wholly metaphorical, and descriptive of the peace to be enjoyed by God's people under the new dispensation."

But if this prophecy be figurative, the figure or figures by which the asserted signification is conveyed should have been stated, and the reader shown that the only tenable interpretation is as affirmed.

(1.) If it be said that the prophet employs the metaphor, then it does not follow that the animals spoken of mean men, because the subject of a metaphor is always expressed in literal terms, and the figure lies wholly in the predicate: for example, "God is light:" here the subject, "God," must be literally understood; otherwise, who or what can be spoken of? And the figure lies wholly in the predicate, "is light." Besides, what is affirmed in a metaphor is something which is wholly incompatible with the nature of the subject. God is not light, strictly speaking, but like it in some respects—in purity, or holiness. If, then, the proposition, "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb," (and so with the corresponding propositions,) is used by a *metaphor*, the wolf must still be *the only subject spoken of*:

but is it wholly incompatible with the nature of that animal to become tame? Can it not be effected by the Creator? What is here predicted is, that the change indicated shall be made in the millennial age—not in the Christian dispensation.

(2.) But is not the prophet employing an allegory, which he explains by saying, “They” (that is, men indefinitely) “shall not hurt or destroy”? So Alexander (after Calvin, Jerome, and others) interprets. But the insuperable objection to it is, that *an allegory is never described in the future, but always in the past tense*. It is absolutely certain, therefore, that what the prophet declares of the animals can not be an allegory. Besides, the *explanation* of an allegory is given, not in the future tense, but either in *the present*, or else the verb is omitted altogether: for example, “The field *is* the world; the reapers *are* angels,” (Matt. 13;) “The vineyard of the Lord of hosts, the house of Israel.” (Isa. 5.) (Sometimes, indeed, the explanation of an allegory is, so to speak, anticipated, and predictions of good or evil inserted before the explanation. In such instances, the allegory and its explanation seem to be intermingled, as in Isa. 5 : 3–6. The allegory proper is contained in verses 1 and 2, where the description, as always, is in the past tense; and the explanation is in the seventh verse.) The sense, then, is, “They” (that is, the animals previously mentioned; compare Isa. 65 : 25) “shall not hurt nor destroy,” or, they shall become tame and harmless as they were in Eden; their nature and habits shall be changed.

(3.) Neither is this prophecy a revelation by sym-

bols; for symbols were seen either naturally or in vision, and are always described in the past tense. The animals, then, here spoken of can not be symbols or representatives of men; for they are described in the future tense, and were not beheld in prophetic vision.

(4.) In this prophecy there is a simile, or comparison: "The lion shall eat straw like the ox." But, in a comparison, the names of the things compared must always be literally understood; and no simile that ever fell from the lips or pen of men was ever based on any other principle. This, of itself, is enough to show that the prophecy relates to the animal creation, and to that only.

(5.) Besides, if the prophecy be "*wholly* metaphorical" or figurative, *figurative in the terms denoting the subjects* of the various propositions, as well as the predicates or things declared of those subjects, *then, how can it ever be discovered who or what is spoken of by the prophet? What revelation will be left, when the laws of figurative language are thus violated? None at all*, but human conjectures and opinions will in reality be palmed off—it may be inadvertently—as the oracles of God. This is a very serious matter, and not to be set aside with a sneer.

In the *metonymy*, there may be and sometimes is a figure in the terms denoting the subject of a proposition; but it is comparatively rare: for example, "*This cup is the New Covenant in my blood;*" where the cup is put, by metonymy, for the wine in it. But who, acquainted with the characteristics of this figure, will venture to affirm that there is a metonymy in this prophecy of Isaiah?

IV. Others tell us that "the millenarian heaven," as they choose to name it, is not the heaven described in the Bible. Christ, *after his second coming*, will, as they affirm, with his people, leave our world again, and return to heaven, and there reign over his saints forever.

This has been so often and so confidently declared by preachers and commentators that multitudes consider it a doctrine of divine revelation. *But there is no such doctrine, or prediction, in Holy Scripture*; not a single passage which foretells that Christ will ever leave our world after his second coming to it; and we have no right to take it for granted without clear and decided testimonies of the inspired Word. If there is such a doctrine or prediction contained in Scripture, overlooked by us, let postmillenarians cite the texts that relate thereto, and demonstrate that they prove the point.

When Christ comes in the clouds of heaven, his *everlasting kingdom* will be established *under the whole heaven*, or on earth; (Dan. 7; Ps. 2; 72; 96; 97; 98; Luke 1:31-33; Rev. 5:10; 11:15; 20:4-6;) and on the earth *renovated*; (Acts 3:19-21; Matt. 19:28; Rom 8:17-23; 2 Pet. 3:13.) *Heaven*, then, or *the home of the saints from the second advent to eternal ages*, will be *our renovated earth*. And it is not dogmatism to say that this is revealed in Holy Scripture.

The only text we remember quoted as a convincing proof for the postmillenarian view in this particular is 2 Cor. 5:1; and it is the only passage which, at first sight, has even a shadow of plausibility in favor

of their hypothesis: "For we know that if our earthly house of (this) tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, everlasting in the heavens." If we take the common interpretation of the greater part of this verse, which is as well if not better established than any other, then our earthly tent-house means the frail body in which the spirit now sojourns; the taking down or dissolution of this tent-house signifies death, or the departure of the spirit from the body; the building, not of human art or device, but of divine workmanship, denotes heaven, the place or home where disembodied spirits of the saints enter. So far, all is clear. Now, the question is, Does this text, in the words, "everlasting in the heavens," contradict the passages just referred to, and most of which have been before explained? Surely not. For those predictions describe very clearly the earth as the scene or place of Christ's everlasting kingdom, starting from his second advent; but this text simply declares or defines the *home of departed or disembodied saints*; there is a *home for them in the heavens, a home ever-enduring to receive them as long as they remain out of the body*. "Distinguish the times," says Augustine, "and the Scriptures will be harmonious."

V. There are other objections, such as the following: The creation of new heavens and a new earth means simply a change of dispensation; and it will be highly unbecoming Christ and his glorified saints to live in a world where death still exists; also, that the increase of mankind during the reign of Christ on earth is not to be expected. These objections may be



most conveniently and fully set aside by a brief outline of the sense of Isa. 65 : 17-25.

1. What is meant by the creation of new heavens and a new earth? It can not mean a change of dispensation, from the Mosaic to the Christian, as some affirm, because such an explanation is altogether gratuitous, and, besides, makes the Apostle Peter write nonsense: "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." But Peter unquestionably lived in the Christian dispensation; he did not expect or anticipate, at a future time, to enjoy its benefits, but was, when he wrote the above words, actually partaking of its blessings; and so were those whom he addressed.

But it is said that the eighteenth verse, "I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy," is the prophet's explanation of the preceding verse. We reply that this assumption is an evident mistake; for in 66 : 22, it is thus written: "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith Jehovah, so shall your seed and your name remain." Here the new heavens and the new earth are plainly distinguished from Jerusalem and her people, and it is expressly declared that the renovated earth shall stand before Jehovah, or be everlasting, and that the descendants and name of Israel shall also be everlasting. They, then existing and righteous, shall dwell in it forever; and thus Peter and Isaiah perfectly agree. The law of the simile likewise proves that no other interpretation is tenable; for, in comparisons, the names of the things compared are

always to be literally taken. A new earth with a new atmosphere is the obvious and only genuine meaning.

2. At what great epoch will this physical renovation of our world take place? The answer is, at the *Parousia*, or second personal coming of Christ, and not before. (2 Pet. 3 : 1-13.) In this context the apostle treats of the coming of the Lord and Saviour, which he foretells will be denied by scoffers, and says that in the day of the Lord, or at the appointed time of his appearing, "we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (Isaiah also teaches the same, 66 : 10-16.)

If any will have it that the renovation spoken of by the apostle is to be understood figuratively, (as they term it spiritually,) or to be interpreted in an allegorical or Origen-like fashion, then let them honestly carry out that fanciful mode of explanation, and see where it will lead them. For if the renovation of our world be an allegory, or means something else, (and that something varying according to the caprice of the so-called interpreter,) then the day of the Lord must be an allegory; then there must be allegorical people expecting that allegorical something; then there must be a long-suffering of the Lord that means nothing; an allegorical conflagration and destruction of allegorical enemies; an allegorical deluge; an allegorical creation; an allegorical Creator; allegorical scoffers of an allegorical coming of an allegorical Lord and Saviour; and allegorical prophets and apostles discoursing copiously and in glowing strains of an indefinable something, or—nothing.

3. Will there be death in the millennium? Our

translation of Isa. 65 : 20 reads thus : "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days : for the child shall die an hundred years old ; but the sinner an hundred years old shall be accursed."

Now, if this be a fair and exact translation of the passage, or if the original Hebrew be rightly rendered so as to correspond accurately to our idiom, then it is evident that there will be death in the millennial age ; no premature death, however, whether of infants or of those more advanced in years ; none, moreover, of the saints will die, but sinners only, and such will be few, and they will be very lightly esteemed, or be accursed by the great community of the holy.

But if any insist on the perfect accuracy of the common translation of this verse, then there seems to be a manifest contradiction to the immediately preceding context : "I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people, and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying." Can Jehovah *rejoice* in his people, with the renovated earth standing before him, if any of them shall then be sinners and die in that "world to come" ? Or, if any can imagine that to be possible, how can it be true that weepers and mourners shall be no more where a fetid corpse is found, that must be borne away for burial ? Besides, to assume such an accuracy of translation in this verse, appears evidently to contradict the parallel passage, Isa. 60 : 20, 21 : "For Jehovah shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous : " (literally, "And thy people, all of them righteous : ") "they shall

inherit the land (or earth) forever," etc. Here it is declared that the restored Israelites, in the millennial age, shall be righteous, and not a great majority only, but "all of them." And if sinners, or the unrenewed, then only die, how can these see corruption at that blessed era? But Isa. 65 : 20, according to the common version, says that some of them will be sinners; if so, they can not be all righteous in the millennium.

Again, the common translation of Isa. 65 : 20 manifestly seems to contradict Rev. 21 : 4: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and death shall be no more," etc. "The holy city, the new Jerusalem," is the symbol of "the bride, the lamb's wife," or the risen and glorified saints. (Verse 9.) They constitute "the tabernacle of God with men," or those in and by whom God will especially manifest his glorious and benignant presence to mankind, then his people. (Verse 3.) "They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Rev. 20 : 6.) In a word, they whom the "beloved city" symbolizes will be the royal priesthood on earth during the millennium, (Rev. 19 : 7 ; 20 : 9;) and in this blessed epoch "death shall be no more." The destruction of Gog and Magog is no valid objection to the explanation just given; for that will occur, not during the millennium, but after it.

The original of Isa. 65 : 20 should be translated thus; and we put it in the following form, that the bodily eye may help the mind's eye:

"There shall be no more thence an infant of days,  
Nor an old man that hath not filled his days;

For could the child an hundred years old die,  
That is, the sinner an hundred years old,  
He would be accursed."

The sense of which is as follows : In the millennium there will be no more funeral processions either of infants or adults ; for could the death of any be supposed possible at that epoch, (which can not be supposed,) such a sinner would be a very Cain in the new-created earth, or thoroughly despised by the righteous dwelling in it.

Our translators took the Hebrew copulative as an adversative particle, and rendered it "but;" whereas it is here an explanatory one, and means "even," or "that is," as often in other passages ; the parallelism, like the former one, being not antithetic, but synonymous, or illustrative. The future form of the verb in Hebrew is used, as all acquainted with the language know, not only like our future tense strictly taken, but also to express all that variety of meaning which in English we designate by "may," "can," "must," "might," "could," "would," and "should." Take the following as specimens, in all of which the verb in the original is of the future form : "So may all thine enemies perish." (Judges 5 : 31.) "Oh ! that my grief might be weighed." (Job 6 : 2.) "Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat." (Gen. 3 : 2.) "But I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause." (Job 5 : 8.) (If it were my case, so I would act, but it is not.) Deut. 14 : 26 : "Whatever thy soul may desire." Gen. 43 : 7 : "Could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down?" (That supposition is impossible.) 1 Sam. 2 : 9 : "For by strength can no man prevail." "So that a child can



write them." (Isa. 10 : 19.) "But how can a man be just with God?" (Job 9 : 2.) (Nordheimer, vol. ii. pp. 186, 187, 188, 189. Prof. Green's Heb. Gram. § 263, § 264 a.) Having justified the translation given, and shown that the prophet, in this way only, is perfectly consistent with himself and with the Apostle John, we conclude that death will be unknown in the millennial age. Thus vanish, we think, all the objections based on the mistaken assumption that death will then be in the world.

4. In that day the Israelites will be restored to their own land; build houses, and inhabit them; plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them, in undisturbed possession; and hence they will then be living in the flesh, or in bodies not yet glorified. (Verses 21, 22.)

5. Restored and sanctified Israel, as a race or nation, will increase in that day. "They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they (shall be) the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them." And if it shall be so with them, why not so also as to the other renewed nations? And what are objections to a clearly revealed fact worth? (Verse 23.)

6. Their petitions shall be instantly heard. (Verse 24.)

7. The animals, then existing, shall be rendered harmless, or as they were in Eden. (Verse 25.)

Such, we think, is a fair outline of the meaning of this celebrated prophecy. And since the physical renovation of the earth will not take place until our Lord's second coming; and, since it is admitted that Isa. 65 : 17-25, refers to the millennium, in which

Israel shall be renewed, it follows that the advent of Christ will be premillennial.

VI. But it is also objected that it is incongruous to suppose that Christ will ever leave the right hand of God in heaven, and come to earth as the Priest-King, interceding successfully and forever for the salvation of successive generations of men; since, at the advent, as postmillenarians affirm, the human race will no longer increase.

We reply that such increase is expressly predicted. (Isa. 65 : 23 ; Ps. 72 : 5 ; Isa. 60 : 22 ; Ezek. 37 : 25.) And since God, infinitely perfect, is a pure spirit, he has no body or bodily members. If, then, his right hand has reference to the most wise exhibition of his almighty power, or to the manifestation of any other perfection of his nature, it must be *movable*; or the place of God's right hand will not ever be the same. Accordingly, we read that when the Redeemer comes in the clouds of heaven, *he will THEN sit at the right hand of the Almighty.* Matt. 26 : 64 : "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." (Literally, "the power;" by metonymy for the powerful one, or the Almighty.) Compare Dan. 7 : 13.

At the *Parousia* of Christ, when the risen and glorified saints (symbolized by the New Jerusalem) come down from heaven to earth, THE THRONE OF GOD AND OF THE LAMB *will be among them*, (Rev. 22,) *so that our Redeemer will then, in the renovated earth and among the glorified saints, as truly sit at the right hand of God as he does now in heaven.*

He will then, in our world, also sit as "a Priest

upon his Throne;" "a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek;" a king on the throne of David, reigning forever in righteousness. (Zech. 6 ; Isa. 9.)

Instead of the intercession of Christ ceasing at his *parousia*, for all saving purposes, as Brown and others assume, it is expressly revealed that he will intercede forever, to secure the salvation of men. Heb. 7 : 24-25: "But this priest, because of his abiding forever, hath an intransferable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save perfectly those coming unto God by him, since he is always living to intercede for them." Here the apostle takes it for granted that there will be men always coming to God through Christ, the great high priest; that they will, in due time, be perfectly saved, because Christ ever lives to make intercession for them: in other words, Paul declares that the intercession of Christ for saving purposes will be efficacious and everlasting. (The expression, "Able to save *perfectly*," (or "to the uttermost,") shows that the glorified saints can not be meant, but men living in the flesh.)

This is the Biblical doctrine; a doctrine which shows us what ineffable glory, in the ages that are coming, will redound to God from the countless hosts of men who are to be saved; far exceeding the number of the lost; and by whose salvation the infinite sufficiency and worth of our Redeemer's sacrifice and the all-prevalent efficacy of his intercession will be demonstrated to men and angels to all eternity. But, according to the postmillennial theory, the salvation of men will be limited only to those who believed from Abel up to the second advent, and the intercession of the High Priest be then at an end. How preposterous

thus virtually to concede, after all that Christ hath done and suffered, after all that the prophets and apostles have written to the contrary, that Satan will at last gain the victory; or that he will be more successful in enticing men to perdition than Christ in saving them with an everlasting salvation!

J. T. D.

## ESSAY X.

### THE RESTORATION AND CONVERSION OF ISRAEL.

AMONG postmillenarians, there are some who believe that the restoration of the Israelites to their own land, as well as their conversion, is clearly predicted. Others maintain that the latter is unquestionably foretold, but deny or doubt as to the former. But they all agree in this, that either their restoration, or their conversion, or both, will take place before Christ's second coming; a thousand years before it; or, during the millennium, when Christ, as they say, remains in heaven.

The questions now before us are—What has God revealed as to these topics? What is predicted with respect to the great epoch in which they are to occur? And is the restoration of Israel to their own land, as distinguished from their conversion, unmistakably foretold?

I. We have already referred to Isa. 11, and 12. In the twelfth chapter, God is described as reconciled to restored Israel; and they, as adoring him, as their deliverer, with overflowing joy and gratitude; all which presupposes their moral renovation. As to their restoration, 11: 11–16, clearly predicts it. This prophecy can not refer to their deliverance from the captivity at



Babylon, for that was their *first* restoration ; but this describes *the second*. In their first dispersion and captivity, Assyria and bordering countries were their only places of residence ; but this prophecy speaks of their return, not only from Assyria, but from the four corners of the earth. In their restoration from Babylon, "Judah" only returned, with individuals of the other tribes ; but here it is foretold that "Israel," "Ephraim," or the ten tribes, are to be restored as well as "Judah," and live together in peace, their enemies being subdued. No miraculous agency was exhibited by Jehovah at their first restoration, but it will be at the second : "like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt." It is evident, then, that this prophecy foretells a restoration and conversion of the whole surviving nation ; or that it relates to their recovery from their present dispersion in all lands, as well as from their present unbelief in Christ.

Now, at what epoch will these predictions be fulfilled ? When "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea." *But will Christ then be in heaven ? No ; but he will reign as king on earth ;* for he shall stand as a signal to the nations, and his rest (his place of rest, his residence, as the original means) shall be glorious ; and this his place of rest is declared to be God's holy mountain, or Zion. (11 : 9-10, with 12 : 6.) Then also the animals shall be rendered harmless ; which will take place when *our Lord himself comes* and renews our physical globe, and when Israel is restored, sanctified, and multiplied ; as has been proved from Isa. 65 : 17-25 ; 66 : 22 ; 2 Pet.

3 : 1-13. The *parousia* of the Son of Man, or the second personal coming of Christ to our world, is the time, then, in which all Israel shall be restored and converted. (Compare Jer. 23 : 1-8.)

II. In Jeremiah 30 : 1-11, a restoration from captivity is spoken of at the time of Jacob's trouble, or the peculiar and unexampled distress of the nation ; from which, however, they are to be saved, or delivered. (Compare Zech. 12 : 1-9 ; 14 : 1-5.) This restoration and deliverance can not refer to their return from Babylon ; for their trouble then was as nothing compared with the sufferings among the nations which they have endured for eighteen hundred years. From the parallel passages above referred to, it seems most probable that the prediction describes their anguish when in part returned to their own land, and besieged and attacked by their enemies, determined to put a stop to that restoration. Now, when will this time of trouble be, and how shall they be delivered from it ? It will be just before the second personal coming of Christ, and he will cause them to conquer, (Zech. 14 : 3-5 ; 12 : 1-9 ; ) their deliverance will be in the day of his coming with all his saints. (Compare 1 Thess. 3 : 13.) When hard pressed by their combined foes, (Zech. 14 : 1-2,) "then shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those nations as when he fought in the day of battle." (See Ex. 14 : 24-25.) "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley ; and half of the mountain shall remove

toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; (for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal;) yea, ye shall flee like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and Jehovah my God shall come—all the saints with thee." It is certain, therefore, that a restoration and deliverance of Israel is foretold to occur at the second personal coming of Christ, and in the time of their greatest distress as a nation.

In that day also, and not before, their national repentance and conversion is predicted. (Zech. 12:10-14; Jer. 31:1, 9; Jer. 31:31-34, with 35-37 vs.) They will be blind and deaf to the Messiah, as well as spoiled and robbed by oppressors, until his second coming. (Isa. 42:18-25, with 10-17 vs.) That the prediction in Jer. 30:1-11, relates to their future restoration and deliverance, is clear also from the fact that they shall no more be subject to foreign oppression. (8 vs.) "But they shall serve Jehovah their God," (or be truly circumcised in heart, be born again of the Spirit,) "and David their king, whom I *will raise up unto them*," or the Messiah whom I will cause to appear among them as their king. (9 vs.) But the Jews rejected the Messiah at his first coming; *they did not then serve him*; but hung him between two thieves; it must, therefore, be fulfilled at his second appearing.

III. Ezek. 34, 36, 37. In these chapters the restoration of all Israel from their present dispersion, and their conversion by the Holy Spirit, at the second coming of Christ, is foretold in such forms of speech

that no ingenuity of man can explain away the predicted facts.

1. The dispersion spoken of is their present dispersion in all lands. “*My flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth,*” (34 : 6, with 12, 13 vs. ;) their dispersion “among the nations,” “all countries,” (36 : 24,) “among the nations whither they be gone.” (37 : 21.)

2. This dispersion refers not only to Judah, or the Jews strictly taken, but also to the ten tribes, “Ephraim” or “Joseph.” (37 : 15-21.)

3. The restoration described comprehends the twelve tribes, or the whole nation then existing. “As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered ; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the peoples, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them by the mountains of Israel.” (34 : 12, 13.) “I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.” (36 : 24.) “Thus saith the Lord God ; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land.” (37 : 21, with 15-20 vs.)

4. Their conversion by the Holy Spirit is predicted with the same clearness as their restoration, (36 : 25-28 ;) and as cotemporary with it. (33-36 vs.)

5. The restored and sanctified Israelites will become one nation, and no division into two kingdoms shall thereafter occur. (37 : 22-23.)

6. When the Israelites are restored to their own land, and sanctified by the Spirit, *the Messiah shall be their shepherd or king, from that time forth and forever.* (34: 23-24; 37 : 24-25.) This has never yet been fulfilled, for Israel is still scattered among the nations, and a new heart has not yet been given them, and the Messiah is not now on earth, but in heaven. It will be verified, however, when God shall send Christ again from heaven to earth, in order to introduce and effect the restitution of all things spoken of by the prophets since the world began. (Acts 3: 19-21.) Peter thus clearly intimates that their national repentance and conversion will not occur till Christ “appears the second time, without sin, unto salvation;” agreeing herein with the ancient prophets. (That Peter addresses the Israelites in their national capacity, is evident from 12-17 vs.; for it was *only as a nation that they then rejected the Messiah*, (14 vs. ;) and accordingly it follows that the repentance and conversion of which he speaks refers to their national repentance and conversion, and hence *the sending of Messiah to them* refers to them also as a nation.)

“Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah;” or their national restoration and sanctification; and their everlasting continuance as such a nation. (Jer. 33: 14, with 19-26 vs.; and Jer. 31: 35-37.) “*In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and*



this is that which shall be proclaimed to her, Jehovah our Righteousness." The Messiah is the son of David, and yet Jehovah, or "God manifested in the flesh." As such he is, according to this prophecy, to appear on earth as king, as the preëminently righteous king, or the great successor of David, and the then author of the justification and salvation of the Jews. It is evident, therefore, that the second appearing of Christ is to be the epoch of the restoration and sanctification of "the house of Israel" and "the house of Judah." Compare Jer. 30 : 3-9, and Jer. 23 : 5-8. (The last clause of Jer. 33 : 16, literally translated, is as follows: "And this (is) what one shall call out to her, Jehovah our Righteousness;" which, in our idiom, is as above given; or, "This is the name whereby she shall be called, Jehovah (is) our righteousness." Compare Ezek. 48 : 35.)

7. Jehovah's covenant of peace with them will be an everlasting covenant; it will run on and stand good to eternal ages, dating from the appearance of Messiah as their king, (37 : 26;) and Jehovah will multiply them, or increase the nation. (Compare Isa. 60 : 21-22.)

8. The sanctuary, or temple of God, will be rebuilt, and stand forever in the midst of restored and sanctified Israel. (37 : 26-27. Compare Isa. 2 : 2-4; Mic. 4 : 1-8.)

9. The land shall become exceedingly fertile, and of Eden-like beauty. (36 : 8, etc.; 37 ; 35.)

10. When these predictions are fulfilled, the other nations, as well as Israel, shall know that the Sanctifier of Israel is Jehovah, the eternal and unchangeable God, and that his promises to them were real and im-

mutable. (37 : 28 ; 36 : 23, 38. Compare Rom. 11 : 25-29.)

11. In the accomplishment of the predictions relative to Israel, God will conspicuously manifest the exceeding riches of his grace ; his wonderful kindness to them in Christ Jesus. (36 : 22, 32.)

12. The immutability of God's counsel herein is consistent with prayer on the part of Israel for its execution. (36 : 37.)

Now, permit us to ask whether it be possible to combine any forms of speech so as clearly and unquestionably to express the restoration and sanctification of Israel at Christ's second coming, if these predictions of the prophets do not foreshow it?

IV. With these specimens from the prophets who "spake as moved by the Holy Ghost," let us direct our attention to corresponding predictions written by the apostles and evangelists. (Matt. 19 : 27-30 ; Mark 10 : 28-31 ; Luke 18 : 28-30.) These passages describe the present and future rewards of faithful disciples ; and also the peculiar honors to be bestowed on the apostles ; and that in "the age to come," or the future dispensation. "Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. 19 : 28.) There is no difficulty in understanding these words of our Lord, if compared with the predictions of the ancient prophets. The prejudices of education, and preconceived opinions, are the only real difficulties in the way of a right apprehension of them. Here the Great King himself

takes it for granted (1.) that "the twelve tribes," or all Israel, are to be sanctified and restored to their own land, as His Spirit foretold by the prophets; and an allusion to that matter by our Lord was sufficient, since it is so often and clearly described. (2.) He declares that the apostles, under his direction and authority, are to judge, or rule over, Israel, when restored and sanctified. (3.) That then Christ is to be personally present on earth, and sit on the throne of his glory. (Compare Jer. 30 : 9 ; Ezek. 34 : 23-24 ; 37 : 24-25.) (4.) That "the regeneration," or physical renovation of our world, and the moral renovation of Israel and the nations, is to take place at his *parousia* and reign on earth ; all which is in perfect keeping with the holy prophets, but entirely subversive of the postmillenarian theory. It should be remembered also that our Lord here, speaking of himself as to sit on the throne of his glory, calls himself "*the Son of Man.*" We should not ask, as once some of the Jews did, "Who is this son of man?" But if the question be put in a better mood of mind, the answer to it may be found in Dan. 7 : 13-14. And this, in our judgment, is the chief reason why Christ so described himself.

The main design of the apostle in Rom. 11 : 25-29, is to show the certainty of the future conversion and restoration of Israel as a nation. He, by implication, denies that as such God has wholly and finally forsaken them ; on the contrary, he declares that the gifts and calling of God, or his national election of Israel and the benefits graciously promised them, are immutable or irrevocable. (Compare Jer. 31 : 31-37.) He

admits, indeed, that blindness or hardness has in part happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in ; but he expressly foretells that all Israel, or the nation as hereafter existing, shall be saved ; that this is God's covenant with them, when he shall take away, or forgive, their sins ; and all this he confirms by scriptural prophecy. (Isa. 59 : 20-21.)

Now, as to the blindness of Israel in reference to the Messiah, the question is, How long will it continue ? " Until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in ;" until the complete number of the chosen of this age be gathered from among the nations and enter the church of the faithful ; in other words, until the end of the present dispensation of God's grace. And this agrees perfectly with what is foretold, Isa. 42 : 18-25, where Israel is described as the servant of God, and yet as blind and deaf to the Messiah ; and this blindness and stupidity, as well as their oppression by others, is to continue until the time comes in which the nations are to be converted, and all antichristian powers are to be destroyed ; or until our Lord's second advent. (42 : 10-16.) Then the pagan idolaters shall be confounded, (17 vs.,) and Israel still be blind and deaf ; or up to that epoch they will reject the true Messiah, but no longer, as before proved.

" *All Israel shall be saved, as it is written,*" etc. Now, since Paul quotes the substance of Isa. 59 : 20-21, and since that portion is intimately connected with the whole following chapter, and forms with it one continuous prophecy, what good reason can be given why he did not intend to refer us to the prophecy as a whole ? Would he quote the beginning of it, and yet

intend no reference to the rest? But if so, then both the conversion and restoration of Israel are there predicted, Paul himself being judge in the matter. (Isa. 60 : 21-22.) “All Israel *shall be saved*,” that is, *saved as a nation*, or delivered from their enemies and oppressors, restored to their own land, and sanctified by the Spirit.

Now, at what epoch will this take place? When “*the Redeemer shall come to Zion.*” There he has *once* been, and suffered, and died, and was rejected by his own people and nation; and soon after they were led captive into all nations, and remain dispersed among them to this day, and that in their unconverted state; their national restoration and conversion, therefore, must take place when he comes *again* to Zion. Then Jehovah Jesus shall be their eternal light, and the days of their mourning shall be ended. Then they shall be all righteous, and inherit the land forever.

#### OBJECTIONS.

I. Some tell us that the predictions in the prophets relative to the restoration of Israel “*may all be symbolical of their return to the spiritual theocracy*,” that is, of their conversion and admission into the Christian church; that “the legislative edict recorded in the 30th and 31st chapters of Deuteronomy” perhaps teaches a literal restoration of the Israelites, but that it is doubtful whether “the predictive poems” of the prophets foretell any thing but their conversion, “their holy brotherhood with the Gentiles, and the universal



reign of peace on the earth." (A Brief Treatise, etc., by A. McClelland. Carter & Brothers. 1850.)

We refer to our eminent teacher with respect and gratitude; but he never considered himself infallible, and no man, perhaps, ever lived who referred his students with more earnestness to the undefiled fountain of Holy Scripture. "Systems of human concoction have their use; but they are of secondary importance. As such, must you view them. You *must get close up* to the pure crystal fountain, that issues from the heavenly throne. There you must dwell; thence must you draw for your own souls, and the souls of those committed to your charge. 'Blessed is the servant, who, when the Master comes, shall be found so doing.'"

When it is said, that the before-mentioned predictions "*may* be all symbolical" of the conversion of the Israelites, it is tacitly admitted that the most natural and obvious interpretation of them is that which sets forth their literal restoration to their own land. Besides, it is indisputable that SYMBOLS, strictly taken, were exhibited in vision to the prophets, and are always described in the past tense, without exception; as any one can see for himself by reading from the fourth chapter of the Revelation to the end of that book, the second and seventh chapters of Daniel, certain portions of Zechariah, and elsewhere.

Now, the prophecy contained in Isaiah, 11th and 12th chapters, is not symbolical. There is no proof, for instance, that a trunk was exhibited in vision to the prophet, with a shoot or upright branch growing from it. If it had been so, the text would have been after this manner: I saw a shoot come forth out of the

trunk of Jesse, and a branch grew out of its roots; but the description is in the future tense, "There shall come forth," etc., and so in the whole prophecy; and thus it is proved that the prophecy is not symbolical, but in ordinary language, literal and figurative. And since Isa. 11 : 11-16 describes, in the *future tense*, the return of the Israelites from the four wings or corners of the earth, it is impossible for it to be symbolical; for, if so, an invariable law in the description of scriptural symbols would be violated.

This matter seems clear and convincing to our judgment, but if any will have it that the prophecy contained in 11-16 vs. is meant to foreshow simply the conversion of Israel, then why not interpret the whole prophecy in the same manner? If *the return* of God's people to *their own land* means their conversion and admission into the Christian church, or something different from what the language of the prophet foretells, what revelation have we left? Will not our own opinions be put under the prophet's words, and we thus "make for ourselves a Bible as we go along"? What analogy or general likeness is there between moving from all countries to a particular land, and a change of heart? And if the prediction in the 13th verse foreshows that there will be peace and harmony in the whole visible church of Christ, when has it ever been fulfilled? Certainly not in this dispensation. But if Ephraim and Judah do not mean Israelites, then what do the Gentiles, or the nations, mean? (10th verse.) And how, by this wretched, falsely-named spiritual interpretation, can it be proved that the shoot from the trunk of Jesse means our Lord and Saviour Jesus

Christ? May it not, by such a so-called spiritualizing process of interpretation, be symbolical of some one else, unknowable and unknown?

Alexander, on Isa. 11 : 11, admits that the dispersion spoken of includes the present dispersion of Israel, and says that "the complete fulfillment is to be expected when *all Israel shall be saved*," but he adds, "The prediction must be figuratively understood, because the nations mentioned in this verse have long ceased to exist." "Some suppose," says D. N. Lord, "from the fact that there is no longer a people there who are known as Philistines, (ver. 14,) that the term must be used by a figure to denote persons sustaining an analogous relation to the church. But denominatives formed from the names of countries are applied to the inhabitants of those countries without any consideration of their national descent; as, European, Asiatic, African, Syrian. In like manner, Philistines may be used for the inhabitants of Philistia, although they may not be descendants of the ancient race of that country." And this is a sufficient reply. Indeed, what is more common than to say, I am an American; meaning thereby a citizen and an inhabitant of the United States, without regard to national descent? When very learned and able men present such objections, we may discern from the weakness of their arguments the real strength of the proofs for the restoration of Israel.

And why do the prophets predict *the conversion of Israel, as distinguished from their restoration*, if they both mean the same thing? This would, indeed, be an inexcusable tautology. See Ezek. 36 : 24-28 and 31-35 vs. Here God promises to bring them into their

own land, and gather them out of all countries. Does *this* mean the same thing as his sprinkling clean water on them, and cleansing them from all their idols and filthiness? Can it mean the same thing as his giving them a new heart, and putting within them a new spirit? Besides, the distinction between their conversion and restoration is expressed in the most lucid manner: "Thus saith the Lord God; *in the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities, I will also cause you to dwell in the cities,*" etc. (33-35 vs.) If, then, the restoration of Israel be doubted of or denied, it must originate from other causes than want of evidence, or scriptural testimony; for this testimony, the testimony of God, we have in the prophets in the clearest terms, and often repeated.

II. Postmillenarians also seem to be somewhat "slow of heart to believe what the prophets have written" concerning the building of the temple at Christ's second Advent. (Isa. 2 : 1-4; Mic. 4 : 1-8; Ezek. 37 : 26-28.) They tell us that Isaiah uses the expressions, "the mountain of the Lord's house," etc., "Zion," and "Jerusalem," to denote the Christian church, when conspicuous and enlarged by converts; and that *so*, only, will the temple be built. The *prophet* says that he speaks "*concerning Judah and Jerusalem*;" *commentators* say that he speaks of the *Christian church*. We think the prophet had the best knowledge of the principal subjects of this his prophecy. It is not a revelation by symbols; for the whole description is, not in the past, but in the future tense. It can not signify the church by a metaphor, because, in a metaphor, the figure lies wholly in the predicate, and the subject is

expressed in literal terms: if a metaphor, then, were employed, "the mountain of the Lord's house" would still be the subject, literally understood. And the parallel passage in Micah demonstrates that no other interpretation is tenable. In the third chapter of Micah, the princes, priests, and prophets of Israel are sharply rebuked for their sins, and the signal punishment there foretold is thus expressed: "Therefore shall *Zion* for your sake be ploughed as a field, and *Jerusalem* shall become heaps, and *the mountain of the house* as the high places of the forest." Now, the very next words are, "But in the last days it shall come to pass that *the mountain of the Lord's house* shall be established," etc. Must *Zion*, *Jerusalem*, and the mountain of the house, in the first cited text, be literally understood? and, in the second, must they all denote the Christian church? Who can believe it? Who can believe that such a system and method of interpretation needs or deserves a prolix refutation?

That there will be a great change in the physical structure of the holy land, and particularly in and about Jerusalem, at the second advent of Christ, is foretold, Zech. 14: 4-5 and 8-11 vs. And Ezekiel expressly testifies that God's sanctuary shall stand in the midst of restored and sanctified Israel forever, and that when the Messiah shall be their king. And what are objections to this clearly predicted fact worth?

III. But the greatest difficulty, in the minds of many, relates to the prediction concerning the restoration of sacrifices in the millennial dispensation. "Neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to



do sacrifice continually," (literally "all the days.") (Jer. 33 : 14-26.) From this context it will be seen that the predictions refer to Israel, when Messiah, the preëminently righteous descendant of David, shall be their king, and the then author of their justification and salvation; that they have reference to the two families or nations into which Israel was divided, or to the twelve tribes; and that God's immutable purpose to effect the things foretold is declared in the clearest and most emphatic manner, the Levites not excepted, but included in that revealed purpose, "Neither (in that day) shall the priests the Levites," etc.

The question is, What is the meaning of Jer. 33 : 18, just cited? The Levites and the offerings spoken of can not be representative of other agents and acts, because *the prophecy is not symbolic*. The prophet does not say, I saw the priests the Levites offering burnt offerings, etc., but "Neither shall," etc. The prediction, then, is in ordinary language.

But, is it not a figurative prediction? We reply that if it be so, then there must be some figure in it, and that figure must be named, or, if not named, it must at least be explained according to the laws and characteristics of such figure. Nothing would be gained by supposing that a metaphor is employed; for the priests the Levites would still be the only persons spoken of, and surely it will not be incompatible with their nature, (living in the flesh when Messiah appears) to offer sacrifices, if such be his will and pleasure. Neither can the prediction be an allegory, for an allegory is always described in the past tense, and accompanied with an explanation, either express or implied.

But if any suppose that there is a hypocatastasis in the prediction, then let them prove it. (See "Laws and Characteristics of Figurative Language," by D. N. Lord.) In this figure there is "a substitution, without a formal notice, of an *act* of one kind, with its object and conditions, for another, in order, by a resemblance, to exemplify that for which the substitute is used." And the resemblance on which this figure is founded "is one of the ease or difficulty with which they are exerted, the strength or weakness, the lightness or burdensomeness with which they are marked, the advantages or disadvantages that result from them, or other similar characteristics and accompaniments." And the subject in this figure is always to be literally understood. For instance, "He tries to hang the door without hinges:" here one impracticable act is put for another equally so, but of an entirely different nature. "Take my yoke upon you." "If thine eye make thee to offend, pluck it out." If there be then a hypocatastasis in Jer. 33 : 18, the priests the Levites would still be the only subjects or persons spoken of; but there is none, since the resemblance on which that figure is founded is wanting.

That the Levites and their offerings should be literally understood is evident from the 22d verse: "As the host of heaven can not be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me." It is the law of the simile or comparison that the names of the persons or things spoken of are to be literally taken; otherwise, such a figurative proposition could never be understood. For instance, "As a jewel

of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman without discretion." Let any one deny that the law of the simile is as just stated, and then the meaning of these words could never be determined. It is clear, then, that the Levites and their predicted services are to be literally understood.

But it is objected as follows, "Will Aaron return from his grave? Christian altars rise to steam with the blood of rams, lambs, and he-goats; and the purified church of the Redeemer return to those weak and beggarly elements from which she has been delivered?" And will "the Levitical bondage be enduring," and constitute "one of the most glorious incidents of King Messiah's reign"?

The answer is clear and direct. (1.) *The prophecy does not relate to the Christian church at all*, but only to restored and sanctified Israel, at the second advent, or when Messiah shall be their king. (2.) *It does not speak of departed Israelites* who loved and feared Jehovah when in the body, and whom Christ will bring with him when he comes again; but of Israel then living in the flesh, or in the bodies not yet glorified. The risen and glorified saints, and Aaron among the rest, will constitute the royal priesthood under Christ; but the prophet here says not a word of these glorified saints, but of the priests, the Levites, who shall be living when Messiah appears. These will be God's ministers to offer sacrifices *in behalf of restored and sanctified Israel*; at least, this is all that is here foretold by Jeremiah. (3.) The objection originated wholly from doctrinal prejudice or preconceived opinions, while at the same time, it is tacitly admitted that the natural

and obvious sense of the prediction is as we have stated. But the mind of the Spirit is to be discovered, not by our traditional theology or philosophy, but by an interpretation conformed to the laws of language; if not, the foundations also of didactic theology are at once undermined.

(4.) That sacrifices will be *continually* offered by the Levites in behalf of restored and sanctified Israel, (that is, during "all the days" of the millennial dispensation,) is expressly declared; and no dislike to the statement, no objection to the predicted fact, can alter the text of the prophet, or make a language prophecy a prophecy by symbols. But to call this "the Levitical bondage," as if the whole Mosaic dispensation and ritual were to be reproduced and observed everywhere on earth by the sanctified nations, is not to interpret the prophet, but add to his words. (5.) That the offering of sacrifices will constitute one of the glorious incidents of Messiah's reign on earth, is evident from Isa. 60 : 7. "All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: *they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar*, and I will glorify the house of my glory;" (or the temple: comp. 13th ver.) Now, the pronoun "they" refers to the flocks and rams before mentioned; and it is declared that they shall come up with acceptance on Jehovah's altar, or be an offering acceptable to him, and that when the Redeemer has come to Zion, and the Spirit of God is poured out on Israel, restored to their own land, and all righteous, 59 : 20-21; 60; when also the nations shall, by their representatives, visit Jerusalem and show forth the praises of Jehovah, and when war and

violence shall be unknown ; so that these offerings *are* mentioned as one of the glorious incidents of Messiah's reign.

But how will anti-millenarians explain the before-cited passages ? Will they say that the meaning simply is that then God's ministers will glorify him by constant utterances of praise, adoration, and gratitude ; and that these are the flocks and rams that shall come up with acceptance on Jehovah's altar ? If so, then we ask by what method is such a signification elicited from the words of Isaiah and Jeremiah ; and next, whether it be not, properly speaking, an explaining away instead of an explanation ? Neither of the texts can be a revelation by symbols, for reasons before given ; nor can they contain an allegory, for this figure is never described in the future tense, but always in the past ; nor is there any figure known to us by which the plain and obvious meaning of the predictions can be set aside. But if there be any figure, or law of any figure, that requires another signification, let it be stated and proved to apply to these predictions. Besides, are verbal and heartfelt acknowledgments to God ever called the offering of burnt-offerings, and the kindling of meat offerings ? When adoration and thanksgiving, as acts of the heart, are alone intended, there is always some adjunct by which they are clearly and sharply distinguished from animal sacrifices. Thus, Peter speaks of "*spiritual* sacrifices," or oblations that spring from a renewed spirit. Hosea says, "So will we render the calves of *our lips*," the offerings that come from the soul through the lips : "offer the sacrifices of *righteousness*," (Ps. 4,) offerings consisting of



righteousness, not of animal victims. But nothing like this is found in the predictions before cited.

But sacrifices, we are told, are a part of an abrogated economy; how, then, can they be restored? We answer that it *is foretold* that they will be offered *in the age to come*, when Christ reigns on earth; and he has a perfect right to appoint such positive ordinances as he deems best, and adapted to the then state of mankind; of which he whose spirit spake by the prophets is the best judge.

We can not see the reason, say some, or the design and use of the offering of sacrifices in that day. But the question is not whether we can fully understand or mentally anticipate the end or ends to be promoted thereby, but whether it is not revealed or foretold; which, if language is to be interpreted fairly, is indisputable. But to reject any truth or fact clearly revealed, because we have not the power or sagacity to discover what God means to accomplish by it; or because we can not satisfactorily explain it, is to take a position that is unbecoming a Christian. The objection, put in a technical form, would be as follows: "Nothing is to be received as revealed and true that can not be satisfactorily understood and explained." But the offering of sacrifices in the millennial age can not be so understood and explained. Therefore, such offerings are not to be received as revealed and true. *On this false and baseless assumption* it might be shown that the doctrine of the Trinity is a fiction; that the union of the divine and human natures in the person of Christ is not revealed; and that there is no such thing as a union between the souls and bodies of men on earth; for neither

of these truths, though clearly revealed in Scripture, and taught by experience, can be so understood and explained as to free them from all difficulties.

But will not these offerings be altogether useless and unmeaning when Christ has come? So, many very dogmatically declare; notwithstanding the predictions of the prophets. Certainly, Christ would have never given his Spirit to the prophets in order to signify by them things utterly useless. And if we can not discover why sacrifices shall be then offered, it does not follow that they will be childish and meaningless. How, then, must these predictions be understood? One mode of explanation is as follows:

1. These offerings are symbolical acts by which restored and sanctified Israel, and the other renovated nations, living in the flesh, are, through the priests, the Levites, to signify outwardly their loyalty, homage, and gratitude to Messiah, the Theanthropic King of the Earth. These offerings will be divinely appointed for these ends; for it is when Christ, the righteous successor to David, shall sit on his throne, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth, that these offerings shall be presented; it is when the nations shall come to the temple at Jerusalem, and "show forth the praises of Jehovah" Jesus. (Jer. 33; Isa. 60.) It seems clear, then, that these offerings are symbolical acts by which men will signify their loyalty, homage, gratitude, and obedience; for *they are to be offered by them as subjects to a king*, to the Great King, Jehovah Jesus, reigning in righteousness over men living in bodies not yet glorified. And such acts, indicative of their heartfelt reverence, loyalty, and obedience to the

“King of kings and Lord of lords” will be justly due to him, and in all respects suitable to them.

2. Nor is there any absurdity in supposing that these offerings will be symbolical acts by which Israel and the other sanctified nations will outwardly signify their faith, reverence, and gratitude to Christ as their *Redeemer*, as well as king; and that for the following reasons.

It seems certain that types were restricted, under the ancient theocracy, to the ceremonial law; to the tabernacle, priests, sacrifices, and whatever else pertained to that law; as is evident from the arguments and illustrations contained in the epistle to the Hebrews. Now this law certainly gave or prescribed the divinely appointed mode of worshiping Jehovah as their God and king. But it is clearly foretold, as before proved, that under Messiah's reign there will be a temple, Levites, and offerings, suitable, of course, to the Christocracy, or Theanthropic government of men then to be established on earth; or, a ceremonial or positive law, regulating the mode of worshiping “God in Christ,” as Redeemer and King. Where, then, is the absurdity of supposing that the offerings then to be presented will be symbolical acts indicative both of adoration and loyalty?

Under the ancient theocracy, and before it, *typical acts* were not predictions of the future redemption, but the appointed mode by which the worshiper was required to signify his faith, penitence, and gratitude. When the victim was slain, or the offerer laid his hand on its head, and the like, he obtained thereby no knowledge of the way of salvation, but indicated, if

renewed, his faith in the coming Messiah and a hope of acceptance through the sacrifice to be offered by him; and this because of knowledge previously obtained. Abel, for instance, offered his sacrifice *by faith*, and was forgiven and saved. But faith presupposes a divine revelation; for if God had not given any revelation of the method of redemption, or the way it was to be obtained, how could Abel know or believe any thing about it, or show his faith by his sacrifice? Now, under the Christocracy, or government of men by Christ, the offerings will be symbolical acts, or a compliance with the prescribed mode of worship, whereby the sanctified nations will signify their faith in Christ as their Redeemer and their gratitude to him as such; in a word, thus they will be required, at the appointed times, when they visit the Holy City, to worship him as God manifested in flesh, their Redeemer and King.

Another mode of explanation, or the explanation otherwise stated, may be given in an answer to the following objection:

Were not the sacrifices *typical* or representative of the sacrifice of Christ; or did they not prefigure that sacrifice? But since he, the antitype, has come, and the pretypified sacrifice been offered, the types, or animal sacrifices, must necessarily cease.

This argument is with many decisive of the question. But when our brethren thus reason, *they take it for granted* that the sacrifices were *all typical* and *prospective only*, whereas they were also (or at least some of them) *retrospective* and *commemorative*, or as it may be otherwise expressed, *sacramental*.

Let us take the Passover as an illustration of this matter. We have an account of its first institution, Ex. 12. (Compare Heb. 11 : 28.) The Hebrew word, *Pesach*, and the Chaldaic form of the word, *Pascha*, which is used in the Greek Testament, and translated "Passover," denotes sometimes the victim, or *paschal lamb*; as in the phrase, "To kill or sacrifice the passover," (Ex. 12 : 21; Mark 14 : 12; Luke 22 : 7; Deut. 16 : 2, 5, 6;) and also the *paschal supper* or festival, when the lamb was eaten, as in the phrases, "To make ready the passover;" "To eat the passover." (Matt. 26 : 19; Luke 22 : 8; Matt. 26 : 17; Mark 14 : 12-14.)

That the Paschal lamb was an expiatory victim, or a true and proper sacrifice, is evident from the fact that it was slain, and its blood sprinkled on the lintels and door-posts of the houses in Egypt, and afterward in the place which God chose. (Ex. 12; Deut. 16.)

That the Paschal lamb was typical and prospective, or was representative of Christ's sacrifice then to be offered, is certain. 1 Cor. 5 : 7: "Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us." In this proposition, the phrase, "our Passover," is in apposition with "Christ," or explanatory of it; the predicate is, "Was sacrificed for us." Accordingly, the sense is, Christ, who is the antitype of the paschal lamb, gave himself as a sacrifice for us. John 19 : 36: "For these things were done, that the scripture might be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken." (Compare Ex. 12 : 46.)

The *Paschal Supper* was a feast upon a sacrifice; a partaking of the sacrificial victim, in joyful and grateful remembrance of a deliverance already obtained. When the victim was slain and its blood sprinkled, it



denoted that God was willing to accept the death of a substitute in their behalf, and thus the lamb pointed forward to the death of Christ; when they ate the lamb, it denoted that they were willing and thankful to accept of exemption from death in that manner; and hence it is indisputable that the Passover was not only typical or prospective, but also retrospective, commemorative, or sacramental; as clearly so as the Lord's Supper is with us. *Exemption from death or penal evils, is, then, as essential to the idea of the Passover as acceptance of the death of a substitute; in a word, the Passover was both a memorial service and a typical one.*

Now, the sacrifices so clearly predicted to be offered in the millennial age *will not be piacular*, because the expiation is made; they *will not be typical*, because Christ himself will be present; but they will be *memorial, eucharistic, and symbolical*. As a memorial service, they will point back to the sacrifice once accomplished on the cross as the cause of the exemption of Israel and the sanctified nations from penal evils; as eucharistic, they will be the outward expression of their adoration and gratitude to the Redeemer; as symbolical, they will be the acknowledgment of obligation and subjection to the Great King. They will thus be modified and adapted to the then state of the world; a world in which if men are not sinless, as some affirm, they will at least rise to heights of holiness never before attained. (Isa. 11 : 9.) With what unspeakable adoration, joy, and gratitude will these ordinances be then observed! What holy love will burn in their souls when they thus acknowledge that

their personal redemption is due to Him who died on the altar of the cross! How gladly will they, in this manner also, acknowledge their Redeemer as their King, as well as Saviour! What a festival will that be which will be celebrated by a redeemed world in the presence of their Redeemer!

If any say that a lamb was the passover sacrifice, but Jeremiah speaks of burnt offerings, etc.; we reply that both "the flock and the herd" contributed to the passover, the latter as an adjunct of the former. This is clear from Deut. 16 : 2, and from the description given of the passover celebrated in the reign of Josiah. (2 Chron. 35 : 7-13. Compare 2 Chron. 30 : 22.)

Besides, if the sacrifices in the millennial age are not to be mainly commemorative or sacramental, how is Luke 22 : 15-16 to be understood? "With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, *I will not any more eat thereof*, (of it,) *until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.*" (Compare 18th verse.) Does not this look like a declaration that there will be a feast upon a sacrifice, or that a commemorative service, analogous to the passover, will be observed when the kingdom of God has come? To explain this away, is impossible. Did Christ and his apostles partake of a lamb slain? If not, how could they eat the passover? If they did, how can we avoid the inference that a paschal lamb shall be eaten again at the time indicated; or a service be instituted analogous thereto, in which not only the redemption of Israel, but of the world, shall be celebrated? All that was signified by sacrifice, therefore, was not fulfilled when Christ suffered, but its com-

plete fulfillment is to be expected in the kingdom of God. And how can this be, except in the sense above explained? How can it be without the restoration of commemorative sacrifices, Christ himself being judge in the matter?

Peter, indeed, in Acts 15 : 10, speaks of a yoke very burdensome to the Jews, and of the great sin of attempting to put this yoke on the neck of the Gentile believers, as if they could not, without this, be justified and saved; for the false teachers declared that unless a man was circumcised, (and thus acknowledged his obligation to obey the whole Mosaic law,) he could not be saved, even if he did believe in Christ. To force the law in this way on the Gentile disciples, would indeed be tempting God; and for any to expect to be justified and saved, not simply by believing in Christ, "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," but by his own obedience to the whole law, would indeed be an intolerable yoke of bondage; for who then could be saved?

But what has this to do with the restoration of sacrifices in "the world to come"? Who believes that the whole Mosaic ritual is to be then reproduced? We certainly do not. Where is there a prediction declaring any such thing? Besides, sacrifices were not peculiar to the Mosaic dispensation, but offered from Abel to Moses, as well as from Moses till the Messiah expired on the cross; they were, then, for full four thousand years, ordinances of divine appointment in the church of God; and they only became "weak and beggarly elements," and an intolerable yoke when men either relied solely on a formal outward com-

pliance with them for salvation, or thought that by their own obedience to law they must pay in part the price of their justification. And will such men exist in the Millennium? Will there be any danger that commemorative sacrifices will be perverted when the Spirit of God is poured out upon all flesh, and the earth full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea?

We should recollect that Jer. 33 : 14-26 relates exclusively to restored and sanctified Israel under the reign of Messiah; as is also the case with the last chapters of Ezekiel, 40-48. (See especially Ezek. 43 : 7.) We should also remember that sacrifices will be offered by the nations, when they, by their representatives, visit "the city of the Great King;" not in every part of the earth. (Isa. 60.) And as to the design and use of these sacrifices, (a subject confessedly difficult,) if it be not as above stated, we will gladly receive from any a more accurate or consistent scriptural explanation. Meanwhile, we hold that even inexplicable difficulties can not nullify or set aside clearly revealed facts.

J. T. D.

## ESSAY XI.

### MORNING OF THE DAY OF JUDGMENT—DESTRUCTION OF ANTICHRISTIAN POWERS.

THAT there is to be a Day of Judgment, all Christians believe. None can mistake the facts thus announced by Paul, Acts 17 : 31, God “hath appointed a *day*, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained,” etc.; but all are not agreed as to the interpretation of the terms used to define it.

Does the word *day* mean a period of twenty-four hours? Does the word *judge* mean nothing more than to pass sentence? Does the term *judgment* simply indicate judicial proceedings? Such is the common opinion; but there is no satisfactory proof of its correctness. It is simply an old opinion, settled upon no other basis than unsupported affirmation; for no one of our popular commentators, so far as we have seen, has attempted to justify it by verbal criticism, or in any other way.

We think the whole subject has been greatly misapprehended, and for these reasons :

1. The word *day* is frequently used in Scripture to mean a period of indefinite duration. Thus we read of—



- (1.) A day of prosperity. (Eccl. 7 : 14.)
- (2.) A day of adversity. (Ps. 94 : 13; Prov. 24 : 10; Eccl. 7 : 14.)
- (3.) A day of trouble. (Ps. 20 : 1; 59 : 16; Ezek. 7 : 7; Zeph. 1 : 15.)
- (4.) A day of darkness. (Eccl. 11 : 8.)
- (5.) A day of temptation, which continued forty years. (Heb. 3 : 7, 8.)
- (6.) A day of lifetime. (John 9 : 4; 8 : 36.)
- (7.) A day of judgment, as above quoted.

Now, is it not plain that in all these instances the word day is defined by adjuncts, in such a way as to prove that it does not mean, and can not mean, in any of these connections, a period of twenty-four hours? If this be manifest in six particulars, by what proof can it be shown that the seventh is an exception? Does not the adjunct "of judgment" show that the day defined by it will be an indefinite period, long or short, as God may please; just as the adjuncts "of prosperity," "of adversity," etc., show that the days thus defined are not natural days? Plainly the usage of the word and the importance of the time it covers forbids our acquiescence in the old opinion, adopted without any thing advanced for its support.

2. The words *judge* and *judgment*, in Scripture, are rarely restricted to the pronouncement of judicial sentences, but are frequently used to mean the *administration of government*. Thus, "Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life." (1 Sam. 7 : 15. See Judges 12 : 1-3; Acts 13 : 20.) In these, and many other passages, a judge means a ruler; and the judgment executed means the administration of government. See Deut.

32 : 36; Ps. 135 : 14; Heb. 10 : 30; Ps. 7 : 2; Matt. 19 : 28; 1 Cor. 6 : 3. Now, as Christ will be king over all the earth, and in the execution of his office will "judge the world in righteousness," it is clear that the judgment day will cover the whole period denoted by the millennium.

The *morning* of that day will be signalized by the coming of Christ to execute his righteous decisions with respect to the *living*. His enemies, the Anti-Christian powers, shall then be destroyed, and the evangelized population of the globe will be judged according to their character and works. There will also be a judgment of the church then on earth, as shown in the parable of the Ten Virgins, the rule of which is made known in the parable of the Talents. All the holy dead will then be raised, glorified, and crowned as the co-regents of Christ, and assigned their dignity of rank and happiness of station in his everlasting kingdom. The fallen angels will be removed from the earth, and imprisoned during the thousand years.

The *evening* of that day will be characterized by a judicial sentence pronounced upon the last enemies of Christ upon earth, "Gog and Magog," of whom we shall speak in another place. Our Saviour will also then raise up, try, and condemn *all the unholy dead*. The fallen angels, having been let loose for a brief period, shall then be hurled into hell, where they, with all the finally condemned sinners of our race, shall continue forever.

*That day*, or the interval between the morning and evening, will be occupied in carrying on to its completion "the restoration of all things," when Christ and

his co-regents shall "inherit the earth," and the glory of his power and their happiness shall be conspicuous all over it. The nations unevangelized at his coming will then be renewed by his spirit; and Israel, restored and sanctified, shall attain the high distinction now reserved for them as a nation in their own land.

Such we believe to be the scriptural representation of the day of judgment. Every text treating of it is in harmony with this view. On the other hand, we think the common opinion irreconcilable with revelation; for as it is certain that resurrection is connected with judgment, the indications given of what the divine procedure will be, in raising the dead, clearly prove this opinion to be erroneous. First, there will be a "resurrection of the just," which will be "*the* resurrection unto life." Second, there will be a "resurrection of the unjust," (each a *band* by itself, 1 Cor. 15 : 23,) which will be "*the* resurrection unto damnation." Third, between these there will be an interval of a thousand years. (Rev. 20 : 4, 5.) Unless this period be included in that denoted by the day of judgment, then there must be *two* days of this description, which is contrary to Scripture.

As to the specific time when this wonderful day shall be ushered in by the coming of the Son of Man, Scripture gives us no intimation; but as to *signs* indicative of its approach, we are not left in ignorance. This must be certain, for a sign is something to be seen, or cognizable by the senses; and Christ has assured us that the sign of his coming in the clouds of heaven will be made visible to men. So there are signs by which we may form rational opinions in reference to

the proximity of our time to the great consummation of our Christian hope. (Tit. 2 : 13.) These are spoken of in Matt. 24. A discussion upon the chronological data from which we calculated the time when "the fullness of the times of the Gentiles" shall be accomplished, would be interesting, and not altogether useless; but the subject is intricate, and would absorb more space than we have to spare, and as its discussion falls not within the design of these essays, we refer the reader to Rev. Mr. Shimeall's work, entitled "OUR BIBLE CHRONOLOGY," in which it is exhaustively treated. It must suffice us to say here, that we believe the time to be very near, and the duty most imperative. "Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." (Matt. 24 : 42-51.)

Many have written very absurdly, we are sorry to say, upon this point, and have thus brought dishonor upon the cause it was their intention to promote. Lack of modesty and discretion, and want of competency, often are associated as the misfortune of some who think they must not bury their talents in the earth; but the results in such cases prove, that burial would have been a blessing rather than a curse. A good cause may easily be made to appear in a bad light by ill-judged arguments, urged by confident weakness; but as this is a calamity liable to befall the interest of every important truth, honest men will not hold any cause or truth responsible for failures extrinsic to itself.

The first great event, which will characterize the morning of the day of judgment as prophetically revealed, is the DESTRUCTION OF THE ANTI-CHRISTIAN POWERS.

Our Saviour says, Luke 17: 26, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man." But how was it in the days of Noah? The sacred historian informs us that "the earth was corrupt before God, and was filled with violence: for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."

The sad effects of the fall were immediately most awful. The knowledge of the Most High was forgotten so rapidly, that Adam's grandchildren became idolaters! Men multiplied at a prodigious rate, but only a few, in the line of Seth, escaped the general ruin. This state of things continued for the first sixteen hundred years and more, during which time there was a uniform and universal progress downward in sin. The worship of God had disappeared, and the usurper had it all his own way. Good men became very scarce, until at length but one family was left upon the earth by whom God was recognized and obeyed. He then made known to Noah his purpose of wiping that generation out of existence; yet he granted them one hundred and twenty years as a space for repentance, during which time Noah became for them a "preacher of righteousness." Nothing is more remarkable than the fact of his entire want of success. *Not a single soul was converted from the error of his ways!* Finally, they were all buried beneath the billows of the flood.

From the drift of this sad history, it appears that the moral putrescence of the world was not only universal, but intensely offensive to God during six hundred years of Noah's life. This fact must be kept in view, if we would correctly understand the implication of Christ's words, "As it was in the days before



the flood, so shall it be when the Son of Man shall be revealed;" that is, as the corruption of mankind increased before the flood, with a steady momentum of acceleration, up to the opening hour of vengeance, so the corruptions of the last generations of "this present world" shall increase, until the punitive visitation of wide-sweeping ruin when Christ shall come. We are shut up to this meaning; for, as we have already proved, there can be no such thing as a *spiritual coming* of the SON OF MAN. Until we be shown to be in error respecting the use of the word *παρουσία*, which always means bodily presence, and can mean nothing else, we maintain that postmillenarianism is irreconcilable with the teaching of Christ in this instance, and in every other where this word occurs. If, then, the "last days" of "this present world" may fairly be contrasted with the antediluvian age as to an implied correspondence in wickedness, we submit the question to all men who are not afraid to follow where truth may lead, how is it possible that a thousand years of happiness and holiness shall be embraced within these "last days," previous to the second advent?

According to this historic illustration, instead of a millennium of peace and blessedness, when the sword shall be beaten into the ploughshare, and the spear into the pruning-hook, we are to look for universally increasing wickedness, if not of gross violence, in some form of spiritual prostitution and aggravated ungodliness, somewhat analogous to that which brought the flood upon the earth. The last of God's elect, about being gathered by the Gospel from "this present world," good and true men will decrease in number,

until a state of the visible church shall be reached, to which the words of Christ shall be applicable: "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find (*this*) faith on the earth?" (Luke 18 : 8.) This is another text full of tribulation to our postmillenarian exegetes. (See Whitby *in loco*.) False faith there will be, and plenty of it; but this question implies the affirmation that the true faith shall well-nigh have left the earth, when the *παρουσία* of the Son of Man shall set its sign in the heavens; for when he comes, it will be to "execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

The anti-Christian powers now in existence, and yet to be more closely combined, will then beswept with the besom of destruction from the face of the earth; for "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence (*face*) of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in all his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day." (2 Thess. 1 : 7-10.) It seems clear from this text, that those who shall be visited with this dire vengeance will be such as have abused and perverted the Gospel, a misdemeanor conspicuous among their other sins. Many think that the "them who know not God" refers to the heathen; and the "them who obey not Christ" points to the inhabit-

ants of nominal Christendom. We think differently, because the same vehement language is used with respect to both; whereas Christ himself said, "That servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." This evidently embodies a principle of distributive justice which Christ will respect in his dealings with the nations of the earth, when he comes. We are inclined to think the latter phrase is exegetical of the former; for they who do not obey Christ do not know God—a voluntary ignorance as inexcusable as it is culpable, and therefore righteously subjecting a man to all the severity denounced in this text.

The aspect of the present hour is not very flattering to the postmillenarian doctrine of eschatology. The day grows darker, darker, darker. Political strife, intrigue, lawlessness, faithlessness, shamelessness, violence, characterize the so-called "Christian nations" of the world; while influences are streaming from the nominal church utterly discouraging. We have in the bosom of the church itself our Colensos, and Renans, and Essayists, who are multiplying in number and influence. The preaching of the old-fashioned doctrines of the cross is christened "old fogysm;" nothing will do now but the brilliant and the beautiful of high-wrought verbiage, as the pinions of exquisite sentimentality; while the *undertow* carries along a heterogeneous mass of discordant sentiment on the vital doctrines of the Bible, yet to come up to the sur-

face in the shape of a Socinio-pantheistic theology. It is not venturing into the domain of prophecy, when from past experience teaching us whereunto all this must grow, we say that the visible church, embracing all the hierarchies of Christendom, will become false to the Lord, and utterly perverse in influence, as well as heterodox in sentiment. With this view, it is easy to reconcile all that is said about the wickedness of the last days being so universal as to merit another visitation of divine vengeance similar to those which appeared in the times of Noah and of Lot; but in any other view we can not see how the strong expressions of Peter and Paul in their predictions of the period spoken of, can be fairly and satisfactorily explained.

We now enter upon the inquiry, Who and what are the powers that shall be combined in the last days against Christ, and that shall be by him miserably destroyed at his coming? It is to be expected that diversities of opinion will exist as to the times and forms of development of *the great Antichrist*, among those who in the main agree as to the fact itself. Who are right or who are wrong, is a matter of little consequence; since all believe that Antichrist embodies every form of opposition to the Saviour from the days of the Apostles to the days of the Apostates, to which we shall presently refer. Time will correct all these minor discrepancies.

Our study of the Scriptures leads us to expect a grand confederation of heterogeneous antichrists, who will agree in nothing but animosity against the cause and opposition to the person of Christ, whom they will not have to reign over them. This confederation shall

ultimately be led under the guidance of the MAN OF SIN, into that direful conflict which shall overwhelm them all in everlasting perdition, and free the earth from the great curse of their presence. Without arrogantly claiming to be right in our position, we shall strive to exhibit the scriptural argument for our belief in as lucid an order as we can.

I. The "LAST DAYS," frequently spoken of by the New Testament writers, shall be distinguished by increased infidelity, intense selfishness, bitter hatred against evangelical truth, and gross hypocrisy. This will be the complex character of *Apostate Christendom*. 2 Tim. 3 : 1-5 : "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; *having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.*"

Protestants have applied these words to the Church of Rome, and have shown by Papal history the justness of the inspired description of that apostasy; but though Popery be the herculean labor of the devil, there are other forms of nominal Christianity that may be similarly characterized. All the hierarchies, whether Protestant or Popish, come in for a share in this inspired delineation of the wickedness of apostate Christendom. 1 Tim. 4 : 1-3, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall *depart from the faith*, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doc-



trines of demons ; speaking lies in hypocrisy ; having their conscience seared as with a hot iron," etc. Where does the Spirit expressly speak in this way ? Nowhere in any specific text of Scripture ; but this prediction was doubtless uttered by the Holy Ghost to Paul himself ; for we read of other instances where he was thus made the instrument of divine original communications, (Acts 20 : 23 ;) or if not to him, to some such prophet as Agabus. This *express* teaching of the Spirit enabled the Apostles to discern the "*mystery of iniquity*," which, in opposition to the "*mystery of godliness*," began to work in their day, but should come to the full maturity of its power only in the consummation of the gospel age. Here again, *Apostasy* is the subject ; and the peculiarity of that apostasy is thus spoken of, *giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons* ; that is, doctrines proceeding from demons. The state of heart maintaining this hypocrisy is also specified, "*having their consciences seared as with a hot iron.*" (2 Tim. 4 : 3 : "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine ; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears ; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables.")

This is a description of reputed gospel hearers in the last days, and of reputed gospel preachers, too, by whom they shall be sweetly charmed into the embrace of the most fatal errors. A graphic portraiture of these *teachers* is given by Peter, 2d epistle, 2d chapter ; and an equally faithful one of these *hearers* in the 3d chapter. Jude also raises the warning voice, "Beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of

the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you that there should be MOCKERS IN THE LAST TIME, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." From the construction of the original phrases denoting this period, we know that the sacred writers spoke of time future to the time of their writing, and included all the period from their own day, when THE inchoate iniquity was *hidden*, down to the coming of Christ when it shall be *revealed* in organized strength, madly to throw itself upon the thick bosses of Jehovah's buckler, and when the whole fraternity of evil-doers in this revolt shall be hurled into hell. God's elect people will indeed keep themselves unspotted from the world; but is it not remarkable that in these professedly descriptive sketches of the last days not an alleviation is thrown in for the support of postmillenarianism; not a peg inserted upon which the arguments spun in favor of that theory can be suspended? The only thing that can be said is that these descriptions refer to the great "falling away" after the millennial period shall have been exhausted; but this is badly said, because it is assuming the very point in dispute; for there is not a sentence to be found in the New Testament, not a word ever fell from the lips of Christ or of his Apostles intimating that such a period as the millennium predicted in the Old Testament in a variety of places, and in the glowing language of prophecy pregnant with promise, shall occur at all between the first and second advents of our Lord.

Now let us remember, that the inspired language aforesaid does not describe the state of the world, but

the state of the visible church. The hierarchical establishments of nominal Christendom, whether they belong to Italy, France, Russia, or England, Papal and Protestant alike, are so interlaced with worldly policy, and so interwoven with political influences, aims, and ends, that they all come within the symbolically descriptive names of "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth." (Rev. 17:5.) And that part of the church which is untrammelled by this unholy alliance, is yet so far conformed to the world that there is a cessation of hostilities between them. These are facts everywhere known, every day spoken of. The part, for instance, which pastors and people of all denominations below Mason and Dixon's line have played in the atrocious rebellion of the South, is a sad stain upon the name of our American Christianity. History will show that this rebellion has been largely indebted for its power and spirit to the influences of Southern pulpits. Such the state of the visible church is about to be; what then will be the state of the world? Infidelity of enormous growth and power, with every concomitant and consequent evil, will pervade nominal Christendom, while Mohammedanism and Paganism in its thousand forms, shall continue to brood over the benighted inhabitants of the earth. Taking this to be the teaching of the Scriptures, we can readily see the aptness of the Saviour's remarkable words, "As it was in the days before the flood, so shall it be when the Son of Man shall be revealed;" and we can as easily understand the import of his inquiry, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find (this) faith on the earth?"

II. The Antichristian powers that shall be organized in the last days, in the spirit of a common malignity against Christ, are the following:

1st. The BEAST. Rev. 13 : 1-3 : "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion : and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority," etc.

This beast is a malformation, and unlike any beast that God ever made. The union of the peculiarities of the leopard, the bear, and the lion, show that rapidity of motion, firmness of grasp, and great power of destructiveness shall make it a fearful enemy, endowed with the disposition of the devil, who "goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." This beast, being an original in form, arising out of the sea, that is, according to symbolic language, out of the popular commotions of faction and strife among men, and displaying a powerful frightful spirit of desperate energy and diabolical execution, must symbolize some living, all-controlling and destructive agency in the world. What is this agency ? It is the agency of the civil rulers within the ten kingdoms symbolized by the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image, a part of which under the dictation and by the persuasions of the ecclesiastical rulers of the Romish Church, have for centuries worn out the saints of the Most High.

2d. The KINGS AND ARMIES of other antichristian nations outside of the aforesaid ten kingdoms, who

under the influence of various delusions shall make common cause with the beast. (Rev. 19 : 19.)

3d. The FALSE PROPHET. This is Popery, which has displayed conspicuously its devotion to the Beast, and is itself symbolized by another beast, having two horns like a lamb, and the voice of a dragon. (Rev. 13 : 11.)

4th. MANY ANTICHRISTS. In the popular acceptance antichrist means *opposition to Christ*. Those here designated, are false teachers who are the leaders of deceived people that have swerved from the faith, or never had any but a false faith; and their followers will make a large division in the grand army of Armageddon. But we hardly think that John meant so much to signify *opposition to*, as *imitation of* Christ, for the purpose of deception. The great crime of the "many antichrists" is the teaching of false doctrine. (1 John 2 : 18-22 ; 4 : 3.) 2 John 7 : "Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." In the former sense, whoever is not on the side of our Redeemer by profession, is against him, and so is antichrist; and whoever denies that he has come in the flesh, must also deny the atonement and controvert the Gospel. The term, in the latter sense, we will treat of hereafter.

Thus the delineation of the last days, and the specification of the foes of our Lord, show us that there will be wickedness enough, and means enough, and men enough to form a mighty effort of implacable enmity to cast his name and people out of the earth forever. That there will be such a conflict of horrible magnitude



when Christ shall come again is taught throughout the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.

III. THE TIME OF THE CONFLICT. It will be at the second coming of Christ. The numerous prophecies on record touching this point embody a great fact, of which we must not lose sight; we mean the restoration of the Israelites to their own land. Without stopping to prove it, we observe that the construction of predictive language necessarily presupposes this restoration, in many instances; not to speak of those passages whose individual aim is to teach it. Thus in Daniel 12 : 1 : "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake," etc. The time of this unparalleled trouble is just before the resurrection of the just. (2d verse.) Of course, it is at the consummation of the age when the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled. But at this great conflict, Israel shall be DELIVERED. Where will they be, when this deliverance shall take place? *In their own land.* And this necessarily implies their previous restoration to it. Unless this be so, it is impossible to explain the following passages without violating the principles of correct interpretation, and departing from the obvious sense of the inspired word.

Joel 3 : 1-2: "For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall *bring again the captivity* of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also *gather all nations,*

and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land." 9th and 10th verses: "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles. Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong." 14th verse. "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining." (Compare Matt. 24: 29-30.) See now the 16th verse: "The Lord shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more."

Zech. 14: 1-5: "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather ALL NATIONS against Jerusalem to battle. . . Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. *And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives*, which is before Jerusalem. . . AND THE LORD MY GOD SHALL COME, AND ALL THE SAINTS WITH THEE." (Compare this with 1 Thess. 4: 14:) "Even so them also which sleep in Jesus WILL GOD BRING WITH HIM."

Is. 13 : 9 : "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine."

Is. 24 : 5, 6 : "The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and *few men left.*"

These quotations, and many more of the same general import, clearly refer to the same time, when this great and final conflict shall take place. All the anti-christian powers that shall take part in that great battle are generalized under the *names* we have just spoken of; and to meet them Jesus Christ will come, not as "the Lamb slain" to save, but as the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" to destroy. Thus the Seer of Patmos beheld him: "I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses. . . And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth,

and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshiped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse." (Rev. 19 : 11-21.)

IV. THE MAN OF SIN. "As ye have heard," said John, "that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists." If this could be said of the apostolic age, we hazard nothing by the affirmation that in every subsequent age, and in every evangelized country, antichrist has been "legion;" and has met with more apparent success in moulding mankind than Christ. The history of his cause in the earth has been very much like that of his own personal ministry when he was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." Nearly all the errors and corruptions that have ever troubled the church have sprung from Judase within her own family; and that such traitors at the head of mischievous influences in his day were meant by John, is clear from the context: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." Every visible separate interest of apostasy, under the guidance of perverse teachers, claims to be the casket of true religion. The great movement of the devil, after his act of secession, was to betray and ruin our race by counterfeiting be-

nevolence ; and so, ever since, every schismatical rending of the mystical body of Christ has been a triumph of this dark spirit of secession, gained by imposition upon the simple-minded, by loud pretensions, by special claims to purity of creed, honesty of purpose, sanctity of life, and zeal for the Lord of hosts. SECESSION is the spirit of the devil, clad like an angel of light, working in the hearts of the disobedient ; and to every opposing interest leading thereto, the Apostle referred when he spoke of "many antichrists." But THE antichrist of whom he affirmed that they had heard that he *should come*, must mean a different thing. The great apostasy which shall ultimately be dragged to light as at the farther end of this chain of connected antichristian interest, in all ages of the Christian church, will be led by the Wicked One referred to by Paul ; and it can scarcely be doubted that his remarkable prophecy (2 Thess. 2 : 1-12) was in the mind of John as he wrote.

The lawlessness of which Paul speaks embraces the vast complication of adverse influences the enemies of Christ have put forth in all ages of the Christian church. It began to operate in his day, as he tells us, in secret ; and he predicts its continuance in thus working until the ultimate development of a LAWLESS ONE, as an individual, an impious wretch whose wickedness shall be so concentrated and whose power shall be so commanding for universal evil as to entitle him to the appellations of THE MAN OF SIN, THE SON OF PERDITION. By the aid, instigation, and communicated energy of Satan, he is so to deceive men through the wonders of his doings as to lead them to accept him



in the room of Christ. He is to arrogate to himself divine honors, and by the energy of Satan he is to establish himself in the confidence of his deluded hosts of infatuated infidels as God incarnate, or the true Messiah.

We learn from prophecy that in the last days the Jews will return to their own land, and rebuild their temple. Still rejecting Christ, but earnestly clinging to their old hope of a Messiah suited to their carnal views, they will be liable consequently to be grossly deceived by this arch impostor, whose facilities and means of delusion shall far exceed the nefarious influences of all antichrists that have preceded him. John significantly asks the question, "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ! He is Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son." This will be the great lie of the Man of Sin. Besides uniting under his leadership the hosts of infidelity of the last days, taking advantage of the hostility of the Jews to Jesus Christ, he will applaud their rejection of him; and with all power, and signs, and wonders of falsehood far exceeding the manipulations of our modern spiritualists, and with all deceitfulness of pious pretension, he shall arrogate to himself the name, nature, and claims of God. Himself a Jew, he will be accepted by a large body of the Jews as the true Messiah; just as they have accepted other less plausible pretenders; and *he will sit in their temple, and show himself forth* by the false miracles that Satan shall enable him to work, *as God*. Thus he will continue to act up to the hour of Christ's appearing. All the hosts of iniquity will be marshaled against the coming Redeemer, un-

der this Antichrist, at the great battle of God Almighty. But Christ shall come, he shall blow upon him, and the hosts of Satan shall be consumed. The effulgence of his bright appearing shall destroy this last great enemy forever.

#### OBJECTIONS.

*1st Objection.* Is not this a contradiction to the prevailing opinion about the Man of Sin? Is it not held that he symbolizes popery, that enormous perversion of the Gospel, whose far-reaching, long-continued agency for evil has cursed the world for centuries."

*Answer.* Although Popery is thoroughly Antichrist, THE MAN OF SIN does not mean Popery, if the latter is to be judged of by the text descriptive of *this* Antichrist; nor does he symbolize the succession of pontiffs who have worn the triple crown of the papacy, and the scarlet clothing of the mother of harlots. The reasons for our opinion are briefly these:

1. Bad as popery is, badly as she has perverted the Gospel, and great as is her apostasy, yet she has never "denied the Father and the Son;" and although the Pope claims to be the vicegerent of God, no one in the succession has ever set up an absolute equality to him. Whatever then may be the impiousness of the Pope, it is vastly different from that of the Man of Sin.

2. This is a prophecy in plain prosaic language, designed for allaying the apprehension of the Thessalonian Christians respecting their departed friends,

and correcting the mistake that had originated their disquietude; therefore the use of symbols or any figurative language would have been incompatible with the apostle's design. Hence, "the Man of Sin" is no more a symbol to designate the line of popes, than the "son of perdition" was a symbol used by Christ to designate all traitors in general, instead of Iscariot; and *the temple* where he sits, as well as the *object* he has in view, and the *author* and *means* of his distinction must be literally understood according to the obvious meaning of the unadorned language descriptive of future facts. The *fact* of the text (2 Thess. 2: 3-12) being an *explanation*, is proof all-sufficient to show that no figure or symbol can be admitted.

3. The Man of Sin is not to be *revealed* until a certain hindrance is taken out of the way; but the popes have never been *concealed*, having from the first taken a conspicuous part in civil as well as ecclesiastical affairs. We regard this as fatal to the common exposition so widely accepted of Paul's meaning.

4. The apostasy of Romanism, although having many features of the antichrist of the last times, is nevertheless only a horrible *corruption* of Christianity; but the apostasy in connection with which the Man of Sin shall be revealed, will be a total DENIAL of it.

5. The *individuality* assigned to the Man of Sin is so strikingly set forth that we can not consider him a mere impersonation of evil, nor a symbol of a succession of individuals; for the same arguments which so assert, besides violating the usages of language, would prove that the revelation and coming of Christ spoken

of in the same passages, denote nothing more than a marvelous interposition of Providence.

6. The nature of his acts and arrogance prove that neither pope or popery can be intended ; but an *individual Man*, whose personality is necessarily implied in the descriptive terms of the text. "He opposeth and exalteth himself above every one that is called God, (1 Cor. 8 : 5,) or that is worshiped ; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself (by false miracles) that he is God." Like Christ, the Man of Sin has his *apocalypse* and his *coming*. The same terms that describe the "mystery of godliness" in Christ's appearance among men, also describe the "mystery of iniquity" in the latter-day appearance of this anti-christ.

*2d Objection.* "The Jewish Temple long since has been destroyed, and will never be set up again, therefore the temple spoken of can only mean the Christian church."

*Answer.* It is contrary to the usage of the sacred writers (and all sensible writers as well) to introduce symbols into *explanatory* passages. Now Paul's design was to explain a certain matter to the Thessalonians, whose state of mind required that he should use simple though energetic language. If the Pope can not consistently be called the Man of Sin, for reasons just given, neither can St. Peter's at Rome be called "the temple of God," much less can the church distributed all over the earth be so called. No place or location in the world but the Temple on Mount Moriah can be intended ; for this is necessary to the explanation. The *mode* of allusion, moreover, to the Man of Sin, indicates

that the subject was not entirely a new one; and this implied hint will lead us to look into the prophecies, to see if we may not obtain some additional light on the subject.

We turn to Daniel 11 : 21-45, descriptive of the rise, progress, and end of a VILE PERSON, respecting whom the language is almost identical with that of Paul. 36th verse: "And the king shall do according to his will; and *he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished*: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, (the Messiah,) nor *regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.*" This certainly appears as though Daniel and Paul allude to the same individual, who is plainly indicated as a *Jew*. Indeed we can not get rid of that conclusion, for there is nowhere noticed, in holy writ, such awful wickedness as that which shall be developed in Daniel's "vile person" and Paul's "Man of Sin." One more circumstance will prove the identity. Paul says that this Man of Sin shall be destroyed with the brightness of *Christ's coming*; and Daniel says of his "vile person," that "he shall come to his end, and none shall help him;" and immediately there is predicted in close proximity with that event, the RESURRECTION of "many that sleep in the dust." (Dan. 12 : 1-3.) Without any reasonable doubt, Paul and Daniel mean the same person, for the historical location is the same.

Now what does Paul say of his man? He will sit in the "*Temple of God.*" And what does Daniel say



of his man? "He shall plant *the tabernacles* of his *palace* between the seas in the GLORIOUS HOLY MOUNTAIN." Here he shall be, according to Daniel, expanding himself in all the extravagance of unparalleled blasphemy, when he shall come to his end; and the mode of his destruction is given by Paul. It should not be doubted, therefore, that the palace of this vile person will be located near the *site of the old Jewish Temple*, the holy mountain; nor do we think it hard to make out a strongly probable argument, that this *palace* will be on Mount Zion, near the building which the Jews shall erect, on their return to the holy land, as their *Temple*.

This prophecy of Daniel is referred by Stuart and others for fulfillment to Antiochus Epiphanes; but that is simply preposterous. We have no space, nor will it comport with the intent of this paper, further to discuss this matter, but we refer to certain passages that may be read at leisure. (Ps. 68 : 29.) This is a Messianic Psalm, and we think, at no time in the history of tabernacle or temple has this promise been fulfilled: "Because of thy *temple at Jerusalem* shall kings bring presents unto thee." The 18th verse is a prophecy of the ascension of Christ, and the 22d verse a prophecy of the restoration of Israel; and if there is continuous progression of thought in the Psalm, we think the "Temple at Jerusalem" is referred to, and must be in the future. (Is. 2 : 1-2; Zech. 14 : 16-20; Ezek. 40th to 44th chap. The subject is beset with some difficulties; but they are not such as can much weaken our argument.

The author of "Christian Theism" remarks: "Some

Christians have been of opinion that the agency of spirits was permitted in former times, and especially at the epoch of redemption, to an extent which has since been prohibited by the Divine will. It has even been conjectured that similar manifestations, and perhaps a reign of atheism or antichrist, instigated and led by evil spirits, will precede the second advent of the Messiah." We have no doubt this will be the literal fact, for in what can the "energy of Satan" be more fully displayed than in the craft by which "some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to *seducing spirits and doctrines of demons*"! We have a sample of this in the strange history of modern Spiritualism, whose energy is silently but securely working out its full share of the great iniquity. The concentrated mass of agglutinated abominations in the Romish church has so long cloyed the world with Christianity, falsely so called, that she will yet be, to a greater extent than she has been, the promoter of infidelity. The corrupt hierarchies of Christendom, that rival her as establishments, will also rival her in precipitating the grand catastrophe of the last days. Evil influences that have singly prevailed at different periods, will then be combined; a new process of infusing devilish energy into all the worn-out forms of infidelity; an efficient apparatus for the most extensive religious delusion; and the spirit of insubordination, of resistance to law, of anarchy, will be widely diffused. This state of things will then head out into a personal Antichrist, who will be accepted as the commander-in-chief of all the cohorts of the enemies of our Lord; but he shall continue only for a little time, and then the great process

of the world's deliverance will begin with his total destruction at the coming of the Lord. Popery, Paganism, Mohammedanism, Infidelity, with all forms of pseudo-Christianity, shall perish ; and the world, long groaning under the "bondage of corruption, shall be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God." WHEN this shall begin to take place, it does not become us to say ; but one thing is quite apparent, the old governments of the world are drifting to their overthrow. Political events, no less than ecclesiastical corruptions, are all hastening on the day when "the fountains of the great deep shall be broken up," or, in other words, when anarchy shall take the place of law and order ; when the demon of discord shall throw the world into an uproar.

The whole pagan world is now accessible by the Gospel ; but the energies of the Church have been hitherto almost always so feebly put forth, that it seems almost evident she has lost faith in her own fondly cherished doctrine of reducing the whole world to the obedience of Christ by her own efforts. There is no adequate proportion between her faith and practice in this respect, nay, she is losing ground at home ; and we think this the evidence that the day is not far distant when the millennial faith of the first centuries will again prevail among God's people.

W. R. G.

## ESSAY XII.

### THE IMPRISONMENT OF SATAN.

“AND I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.” (Rev. 20 : 1-3.)

One of the symbols of this vision is explained; or “the dragon, that old serpent,” is declared to mean “the Devil and Satan.” Of this, therefore, mistake is impossible, and all agree that it does not denote him alone, but the prince with the host of fallen ones under his control.

I. *Who* will seize, bind, and confine Satan? or, what agent or agents are meant by *an angel* with the key of the abyss and the great chain in his hand? Some answer that our Saviour is intended, to which we can not assent. The mere having or holding the key of the abyss or prison does not imply that that key belongs to the angel by original right, any more than a key of the state prison in the hand of a sheriff would

prove that he was the governor or supreme magistrate of the state. Our Lord is not meant by this angel—first, because a created angel can not be a fit symbol of his Creator and Sovereign, (Col. 1 : 15–16, and 2 : 10 ;) secondly, because wherever our Lord is mentioned in the Revelation, he is always described in such a way as to distinguish him unmistakably from all others. For instance, in the nineteenth chapter, he is said to have “a name which none knew but himself,” or Jehovah; he is also called “Word of God,” and “King of kings and Lord of lords.” And in the fifth chapter he is called “the Lion of the tribe of Judah,” “the Root of David,” and the Redeemer of men by his blood. But no such description of the Saviour is here given, or nothing that unequivocally designates him as the person intended. For the reasons now given, it follows that this interpretation must be abandoned as untenable, no matter how excellent and venerable they may have been who have advocated it.

An angel, in this prophecy, often stands for or represents men, according to that law of symbols which requires the agents representing and represented to be of a different class, when in the nature of the case possible; and one angel is thus employed to signify many men. For instance, in the tenth chapter, “And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow over his head, and his face as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire; and he had in his hand a little book opened,” etc. In this vision, as nearly all agree, the Reformers of the sixteenth century are set forth. And, indeed, if a mighty angel had come down from heaven in the



manner described in this symbolic picture, he would not have been more conspicuous, nor roused the attention of men more than did the Reformers, with the opened book or translated Bible in their hands. Men, however, can not be intended by the angel spoken of in the vision before us; for they are, in all respects, too weak to seize, bind, and imprison the fallen angels for any period, much less for a thousand years.

Who, then, are designated? We answer, *the holy angels*; and as one symbolic agent represents many agents, so "an angel" here signifies the multitude of the unfallen angels, just as Satan represents the other angels that sinned. And the holy angels appear in the vision in their own persons, since no other agents known to us can symbolize them, and especially in the acts here ascribed to them.

The Lord Christ is "the head of all principality and power;" and he, no doubt, will send the holy angels to seize, bind, and imprison the fallen ones. Now, the angels of light are fully competent for this work, since they "excel in strength;" and when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, his retinue will consist, not only of all his saints, but also of "his mighty angels."

II. The explanation of the other symbols is not hard to be understood. *The key of the abyss*, or prison, (7 vs.,) which the angel holds, denotes that the holy angels will receive authority from our Lord to open and shut the prison on the fallen spirits. Christ, so to speak, will hand them the key of the devil's prison, and say, Go, seize and bind Satan, and then open the doors of his dungeon and shut him in. *The great chain*

in the angel's hand denotes the powerful means which the holy angels will be appointed to employ in order to accomplish their mission. What precisely these means will be it is impossible to tell; all that the symbol sets forth is, that it will be like a chain used by men in crippling and overpowering fierce and desperate criminals. *The seizing, binding, and casting of Satan into the abyss* denotes the various or successive and direct acts of power which Christ's mighty angels will exert until all the fallen ones are wholly subdued and consigned to the prison appointed for them during the thousand years.

*The abyss*, or bottomless pit, is the symbol of some part of Tartarus or hell. (Compare Luke 8 : 31.) *The shutting up of the abyss, and the sealing* or closing it tightly, *upon Satan*, signifies the security of the prison, and the utter impossibility of the escape of the prisoners. The MSS. A, B, with many others, read, *and shut and sealed (it) upon him;* and so also the Vulgate, Syriac, and Armenian versions. (See Tischendorf's N. T. ed. 7th.)

III. *The duration* of their imprisonment, "*a thousand years.*" Are these words a part of the symbols, or a literal designation of time? It would seem most consistent with analogy to hold that "the time is symbolic, as well as the agents, acts, and objects of the acts." But still, this interpretation seems liable to two objections: first, while it is certain that a day, in this prophecy, is used for a year, and a month for thirty years, it is not certain that a year is used for three hundred and sixty years; second, in the explanation given of the first resurrection, a thousand years are

mentioned, and no more—and this explanation is expressed in literal language.

IV. *The design of their imprisonment*: “That he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled.” These words are no part of the symbols, but an explanation given by the Holy Spirit. God’s purpose in this particular is thus explicitly declared to be that the fallen angels, during the millennium, may be altogether prevented from deceiving the nations; and “the nations” mean only men living in the flesh on earth. It is hardly necessary to add that the banishment of these subtle and malignant spirits will greatly facilitate the conversion of the world, and that it is in vain to expect that conversion before this prophecy is fulfilled, or before Christ’s second advent; since during the thousand years the devil and his angels will not only be confined in hell, but the *risen saints* reign with Christ on earth.

V. *The necessity of their release after the millennium*: “And after that he must be loosed a little season.” This is a moral necessity, and refers to the decree or purpose of God that so it must or ought to be. The only wise God always decides with the greatest possible equity, and with the very best possible reasons; and hence the release of the fallen angels would not be permitted by him unless it should be overruled in such a way as to lead to the ultimate good of those written in the Lamb’s book of Life, and to all holy intelligences in all places of his wide dominion.

This is a subject indeed which even the renewed in this life, because imperfectly sanctified, and therefore to some degree prejudiced through the blinding in-

fluence of indwelling sin, can not be expected to comprehend or fully understand; but they may and should apprehend or lay hold of it as true, because it is clearly revealed. In the release of the fallen angels, a fearful and last demonstration of the severity of God's justice and sovereignty will be given, as, in the millennium, of his unspeakable and all-conquering grace. We, as disciples of Christ, should cultivate humility and docility; and when we can not comprehend we should adore, saying with Paul: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable his judgments, (or decrees,) and his ways (or mode of executing them) past finding out!"

There is, however, to us even now a source of consolation in the fact here revealed that these foul spirits will be permitted to be at large on earth for a *little time*—a little while, when compared with the blissful millennium then past; and a little while, when compared with the blissful ages of eternity coming for the redeemed.

VI. *This prediction is as yet unfulfilled.* If, however, there be any who affirm that the millennium is past, and that Satan has already been bound and imprisoned a thousand years, such an astonishing declaration or proposition needs powerful confirmation on their part, and it is their duty to prove it from the history of the Christian church, and to show that such history agrees, in all main points, with Rev. 20: 1-6, and with other prophecies pertaining to the subject—which never has been done, nor can be. "For reckon," says Bishop Newton, "the thousand years with Usher from

the time of Christ, or reckon them with Grotius from the time of Constantine, yet neither of these periods, nor, indeed, any other, will answer the description and character of the millennium—the purity and peace, the holiness and happiness of that blessed state. Before Constantine, indeed, the church was in greater purity, but was groaning under the persecutions of the heathen emperors. After Constantine, the church was in greater (outward) prosperity, but was soon shaken and disturbed by heresies and schisms; by the incursions and devastations of the northern nations; by the conquering arms and prevailing imposture of the Saracens, and afterward of the Turks; by the corruption, idolatry, and wickedness, the usurpation, tyranny, and cruelty of the Church of Rome. If Satan was then *bound*, when can he be said to be *loosed*? Or how could *the saints* and *the beast*, Christ and antichrist, reign at the same period? This prophecy, therefore, remains yet to be fulfilled.”

Besides, it has been proved in former essays, and it is expressly revealed, that the nations will not be converted until our Lord has come the second time to establish his kingdom on earth; and that the conversion of men up to that great day will be individual, not national, as our Saviour himself declared when he commissioned the apostles. And how can Satan be bound and safely imprisoned, when he everywhere leads the greater part of mankind captive at his will? And has not this been true ever since the ascension of our Lord?

Again, a millennium without the first resurrection is wholly against what is clearly predicted, Rev.



20 : 4-6. The risen saints—such is the inspired explanation—shall reign with Christ during the thousand years in which the fallen angels are imprisoned in hell. But who believes that all the holy dead have been raised? How can they be raised and reign with Christ, according to the Scriptures, until our Great Redeemer-King has come? A millennium *without* the *parousia*, or personal presence of Christ; *without* the conversion of the nations; *without* the resurrection of God's elect and Christ's co-regents; *without* the restoration and regeneration of Israel; *without* the destruction of the civil and ecclesiastical tyrants in all the earth; *without* universal peace among the nations—*where, in the whole Scripture, have we the darkest hint of any such millennium?* Nowhere. But we forbear, since such a palpable error hardly deserves even a brief refutation.

Permit us here to add that, coterminously with the imprisonment of the devil and his angels, will be THE OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT UPON ALL FLESH.

When Satan and his hosts are in the bottomless pit; when God has destroyed the despots in church and state who destroyed the earth, (Rev. 11 : 18,) then, or in the millennial age, the Good Spirit, the Spirit of God and of Christ, will, by the "everlasting gospel," renew and sanctify the nations. "And he showed me a river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." (Rev. 22 : 1.) This river is the symbol of the purifying and refreshing influences of the Holy Ghost, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son. Not a spring, not a brook, but *a river*—descriptive of most abundant in-

fluences; and a river of water *of life*, the source of spiritual life to the nations. Or, as it is expressed by Isaiah, when treating of Christ's reign: "*The earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea.*"

## OBJECTIONS.

I. If there be any who still hold that the millennium and the imprisonment of Satan are past, or that these predictions have already been verified, they must, of course, also maintain that the second advent of Christ is not the epoch when Satan's imprisonment will begin. If so, they are bound to show from Scripture *when* it is foretold to occur. After this is attempted, it will be time enough to examine the proofs adduced.

That the binding of Satan will occur at Christ's *parousia*, and not before, is clearly revealed; for Satan and his angels are confined in the abyss at the epoch and during the era of the millennium, when the saints live and reign with Christ; with Christ who comes with the hosts of his redeemed to destroy his malignant and implacable foes. (Rev. 19: 11-21.) This appearing of Christ will be a personal and visible one; and he appears in the vision in his own person, (11-16 vs.,) because no symbolic agent could represent him who is God manifested in flesh. He appears or comes to earth as the King of kings and Lord of lords, and as the Judge to smite with the sword of his mouth the rebellious nations, or the beast, the kings of the earth and their armies, with the false prophet; or to trample on them as grapes in the wine-press of God's wrath.

(Compare Isa. 63 : 1-6.) But his coming as king and judge can refer only to his second advent. Besides, the vision in 20 : 4 is explained or declared to be the first resurrection, and the saints or holy alone have part in it. But they that are Christ's shall be made alive at his *parousia*, or second personal coming. (1 Cor. 15.) Now, since Satan is to be seized, bound, and imprisoned in the abyss when the holy dead arise to reign, it is certain that his confinement will take place at the beginning of the millennium, when Christ appears the second time.

II. Some maintain that the restraint of Satan will be partial, not total, during the thousand years; or that the vision in this respect must be comparatively understood; and hence to the text, "*that he should deceive the nations no more,*" etc., they add, *as he did before*, or similar expressions. But this is a mere human conjecture, opposed to the inspired explanation of the design of the binding, and must be rejected as such.

Besides, the symbols most clearly show that it will be, not a restraint simply, but an imprisonment, and that total and complete. The prison is the abyss. (20 : 7, with 3d verse.) Satan is first laid hold of, or seized; then bound; then, when bound or chained cast into the abyss, or prison; then the prison is shut and sealed upon him: and this during the thousand years. Now, it is evident that the seizing and binding are preparatory acts, and that the imprisonment is the chief thing symbolized, or represented. *But will Satan, during this era, break his chains, burst open the sealed door of his dungeon, and escape to deceive the nations, but not quite so much as before? Is this inter-*

*preting* the symbols of a prophecy inspired of God? Seriously and earnestly, Is it not substituting our traditional theology for a divine revelation?

Many antimillenarians explain the vision in Rev. 20: 1-3, as if it were thus described: And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him, or hampered him with ball and chain a thousand years; and then let him go on earth, thus fettered, to deceive the nations, but not as he did before: but the vision is not thus described; the key, the abyss, and the confinement in it during the millennium are a part of the vision as John beheld and described it. And how can Satan be "going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it," or be limping and skulking in any nook or corner of it, and be ensnaring souls, *when he is chained and cast into the bottomless pit, and that pit shut and sealed upon him?* How could the complete banishment from earth and the perfect imprisonment of the fallen angels be more strikingly or unambiguously exhibited?

III. As to the agents by whom the fallen angels are to be imprisoned, we have, agreeably to the laws of symbols, proved that they will be the holy angels; that Christ will not do it personally, but commission them to do it; and that men are perfectly incompetent for such a work. Before this interpretation can be set aside, it must be proved that herein we have violated the laws of symbolization, and that men are competent to seize, bind, and confine Satan and his angels for a thousand years.

But if any insist that this will be effected by the instrumentality of the church of this dispensation, or any members thereof; they can not have even a spider's web to lay such a supposition on, before they make the complete imprisonment. a partial or imperfect restraint; which opinion has already been refuted. Let Satan be at large on earth, though hampered with ball and chain; yet who in all the Christian church, the Luthers and Calvins in it, or all combined under their guidance, could prevent him from deceiving the nations? Who could do it for the thousand years; and so thoroughly that he should no more succeed during that period?

If any say that it will be done by an act of divine providence, let them show that *an agent represents, not an agent, but an act!* By this method, seizing, binding, and imprisoning, which are acts, might stand for agents! Let them show that an angel is a fit symbol of his Creator. This will not do. It is a perfect violation of the laws of biblical symbols; and no such falsely-named interpretations can be entertained for a moment.

IV. It is generally held that the thousand years are a literal designation of time. Lange, in some parts of his commentary on Matthew, seems to understand the millennium as an indefinite period, but of very long continuance. But this is unsatisfactory, and not proved. Our conjectures or suggestions as to what the thousand years may mean, amount to nothing without clear and convincing proof.

"*The period of the imprisonment,*" says D. N. Lord, in his Exposition of the Apocalypse, "*is symbolic, as*



well as the agents, the key and the chain, the abyss and the seal; and representing, like other symbolic periods, a year for each day, denotes three hundred and sixty thousand years. It can no more be assumed that this part of the representation is not symbolic, than that any other part is not. The period of a symbolic act must necessarily be symbolic as well as the agent, the object, the instrument, the scene, and the action itself. Whatever reason can justify the assumption that any one of them is not a symbol, will equally justify the denial of that character to every other."

That there is strength in this reasoning, is readily admitted; and the conclusion is indubitable, if the expression, "a thousand years," as often as it occurs in Rev. 20 : 2-7, be a symbolic designation of time.

Since the preceding essay was written, we have reconsidered this matter, and are now inclined to think that the time spoken of is symbolic; and that for the following reasons :

(1.) The period of a symbolic act must necessarily be symbolic, for the reason given in the above citation.

(2.) It is not the custom of the prophets, in their symbolic prophecies, ever to explain symbolic designations of time. Dan. 12 : 5-7, 11-12 vs., Rev. 11 : 1-3 and 12 : 6, are instances in point.

(3.) A symbolic year is no more inconsistent with analogy than a symbolic month or day.

J. T. D.

## ESSAY XIII.

### THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

“AND I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and (I saw) the souls of them that had been beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God; and whoever (or, they who) had not worshiped the beast, nor its image, nor received the mark upon their foreheads and on their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished. This (is) the first resurrection. Blessed and holy (is) he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” (Rev. 20 : 4-6.)

Here we have a vision of the resurrection of the holy dead; and of their inauguration as the royal priesthood, and co-regents of Christ, during the thousand years in which Satan is shut up in the abyss; and the vision is accompanied with an inspired explanation. The departed saints appear in the vision in their own persons, because no other agents could symbolize them in their disembodied state, or as rising from the dead. Living men as such could not; for there is no analogy, or general likeness, between men as living and as dead;

men living could not therefore represent those who are not in the flesh, nor in the act of rising again. Angels could not, because incapable of death, and hence of a resurrection. The departed, accordingly, appear in their own persons.

The *beast* is the symbol of the ten kingdoms, which uphold the apostate papal church. *Its image* is the symbol of the hierarchal government, or papal authority, exercised over the people of these kingdoms: this image was made under the controlling influence and agency of the two-horned beast, or papal clergy in Italy, who have a government over the ten kingdoms, with various grades and offices like that of the beast. (Rev. 13.) *To receive the mark of the beast upon the forehead and hand*, is to submit in a public and conspicuous manner to the arrogant claims of the civil rulers of those kingdoms, especially as to their laws relative to religion and a state church. *To worship the beast and its image*, is, so far as the people are concerned, virtually to put the civil magistrates and the papal clergy in the place of God, and to receive, with profound submission, their religion from them as the highest authority.

I. *The nature or kind of resurrection here predicted*: Is a literal or figurative resurrection denoted? In our judgment, it is a *literal* one, or a reunion of soul and body. We hold this as the true interpretation, for the following reasons:

1. *Because the vision is so explained by the Holy Ghost.* THIS IS THE FIRST RESURRECTION; which is susceptible of only this meaning: This vision symbolizes, or represents, the first resurrection. Thus, "the seven stars are

the *messengers* of the seven churches, and the seven *candlesticks* are the seven *churches*." (Rev. 1 : 20.) Golden vials full of *odors* (or incense) which are the *prayers* of saints. (v. 8.) "*The dragon, that old serpent, who is the devil, and Satan.*" (20 : 1.) Now, since all explanations thus given in this prophecy are expressed in literal language, it follows, by fair and necessary inference, that the first resurrection will be a true and proper one. If the explanation of a symbol be itself a symbol, then the Revelation will be a book of inexplicable enigmas; but none who reverence God and believe in the plenary inspiration of his Word, will ever think that they have a right to substitute their interpretation for that which the Spirit has given. Prejudices of education may dim their eyes for a while, but not always; not, when the truth in this matter is clearly presented to them.

2. Because it is admitted by interpreters, millenarian and antimillenarian, that the vision contained in the latter part of this chapter designates a literal resurrection. And, indeed, it does. But if so, then the first resurrection must be literal too, for both visions relate to the dead and their resurrection; as is indisputable from these words: "But the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished." Now, this parenthetical or explanatory note takes it for granted, or assumes it as an incontrovertible fact, that the representatives or symbolic agents in the vision contained in the fourth verse were used to denote the holy dead, and their living, to denote their resurrection. For "the rest of the dead" mean the literally dead, as all must admit, (those treated of in 11-15 vs. ;) and their

living means their literal resurrection ; and the apostle thus expressly affirms that the resurrection of both classes will be of the same sort, or proper, real, and literal ; a resurrection of men in their complete nature, or with body and soul reunited.

3. Because a figurative, or so-called spiritual interpretation of the vision is altogether untenable, since no prediction can be figurative unless it be expressed in figurative language. But this prediction is *not* expressed in figurative language ; it is exhibited by symbols, accompanied with a literal explanation of them. Now, to confound a prediction by figurative language with a prediction by symbols is wholly inadmissible. No two things can be more different. Figures and symbols are not the same ; neither are their laws, characteristics, and rules of interpretation, as has been ably shown by Mr. D. N. Lord, whose main positions as to these matters remain up to this time unrefuted.

Moreover, a spiritual resurrection, or regeneration, can not be intended in the vision, because it speaks only of the *holy* dead ; and particularly of the martyrs and confessors of Jesus, or of those who never did homage, nor submitted to the civil and ecclesiastical tyrants who had usurped the throne and rights of God. But some plead for this spiritual resurrection, in the vision before us, with a sort of desperate steadiness, and ask, Why can not the vision designate those who shall hereafter be renewed, and appear in the church with a disposition like that of the martyrs, confessors, and other departed saints ? We answer that *such a conjecture is utterly inconsistent with the inspired explana-*



*tion of the vision*, and is, in fact, a *virtual rejection* of this revelation of the Most High, since it substitutes the opinion of fallible men for the interpretation of the Holy Spirit. For, according to this hypothesis, the inspired explanation needs explanation, or is meaningless, unless we can bend it to a preconceived opinion. Now, let us for a moment examine this hypothesis. According to it, the sense is as follows: "This is the *first regeneration*." But do any of the *saints*, separate from the body, *need regeneration*? And where, in the whole Scripture, is there a *promise* which relates to the regeneration of any of the dead at Christ's coming, or at any other time? Besides, if this be *the first regeneration*, will not that clearly imply that there never had been, nor will be, any regeneration of men up to the millennium, or, at least, no revivals of undefiled religion till then? which is manifestly erroneous. Again, if *the living* of the departed saints, martyrs, and confessors means a moral regeneration, then they could not have been saints at all; but, even on this false and baseless assumption, it follows that *the living* of "the rest of the dead" must likewise denote a moral regeneration! And thus there is left in this chapter no prediction at all of any true and proper resurrection, but only a highway built on air leading to the worst quagmire of Origenism. They who walk therein with a lie in their right hands, will say, The ultimate regeneration and consequent salvation of all men is sure; even of those whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life, and who are to suffer the pains and penalties of the second death! So evident it is, that the misnamed figurative or spiritual interpretation

of this vision is rotten to the core, and must be abandoned as wholly untenable and of a decidedly pernicious tendency.

But it is objected that John says, I saw "*the souls* of them that had been beheaded," etc., as if this expression could set aside the literal resurrection. It is, however, but a weak and pointless evasion. For if John had meant to designate martyr-like men, he would not have employed the word *ψυχη*, (psyche;) since it is never so used in the New Testament, that is, there is not a single passage in which it means men who have a disposition like that of others. It often means *life*; *soul*, especially as to its appetites and desires, and also as immortal; sometimes by synecdoche, *a person*; and also the *soul absent from the body*. In this last signification it is here employed, and in 6:9, "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw beneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God," etc. Accordingly, the sense is: I saw the departed martyrs, and they lived or rose from the dead. Nothing known to men can be a symbol of a disembodied human soul; no picture can be drawn of it; hence, in the vision, the souls of the departed could be mentioned only by the ordinary word descriptive thereof, or by the expression, "the dead," as in the subsequent vision.

II. *The extent of the resurrection.* Is it to be confined to the martyrs and confessors alone, or will it also embrace all the other departed saints? That the first resurrection will be restricted to the saints, appears not only from the vision, but also from its explanation, "Blessed and *holy* is he that hath part in the first

resurrection," etc. "*But the rest of the dead,*" the *unholy* dead, "*lived not until the thousand years should be finished.*" So clearly is it declared that the first resurrection will be of the holy alone; but the second of the unholy; and that there will be an interval of a thousand years between the resurrection of the saints at the beginning of the millennium, and that of the wicked at its close.

Special mention, indeed, is made of the martyrs and confessors in this vision; and their honors in the great day will be unquestionably preëminent, or far exceed those of babes in Christ. But to say that the martyrs and confessors will alone arise and reign with Christ at the first resurrection can not be proved from this vision, nor from other portions of Scripture. Not from this vision, with its explanation; for they who arise in the first resurrection are *the saints*, or the holy; but if none but martyrs and confessors arise, then it would follow that they alone are saints. And for another reason; because it is here written: "*I saw thrones, and THEY SAT UPON THEM.*" *Who* sat on these thrones, as John beheld the vision? We answer, the armies in heaven who followed the great King as he came to the earth for the destruction of his implacable enemies, the beast, false prophet, etc. (Rev. 19 : 11-21.) Now, these armies who will come with the Captain of our Salvation are all his departed saints. 1 Thess. 3 : 13 : "AT THE COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST WITH ALL HIS SAINTS." Zech. 14 : 5 : "JEHOVAH MY GOD SHALL COME; ALL THE SAINTS WITH THEE."

"I SAW THRONES, and *they sat upon them*, and

JUDGMENT *was given unto them;*" kingly and judicial authority was conferred upon them. This corresponds exactly with the inspired explanation in Daniel 7, "THE SAINTS of the Most High SHALL TAKE THE KINGDOM," etc. (18th verse. Read also Daniel 7 : 21-27.)

Let us glance for a moment at other portions of Scripture pertaining to this subject; and, first, on this prophecy, 2 : 11: "*He that overcometh* SHALL NOT BE HURT OF THE SECOND DEATH." But the conqueror here spoken of does not mean martyrs and confessors only, but every true saint that died at Smyrna; or the like elsewhere, 2 : 26, "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, TO HIM WILL I GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS," etc.; 3 : 21, "To him that overcometh WILL I GRANT TO SIT WITH ME ON MY THRONE," etc. Now, these promises of our Redeemer belong to his saints as such, not to martyrs and confessors only; and they correspond with what we read, 20 : 6; 1 Cor. 15: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive. *But each one in his own band,*" (or order,) "Christ the *first-fruits*; *afterward*, they that are Christ's, at his coming; *next*, the last band," (or the *last* in the series or order of the dead to be made alive,) "when he shall have delivered up," etc. The order or series in the resurrection, in the original, is expressed by *epeita*, equivalent to *afterward*, and by *eita*, meaning next; not by the word *tagma*, the proper meaning of which is *band*, cohort, or division of an army. But if any will contend for the rendering "order," it will not affect our present argument; since THEY THAT ARE

CHRIST's shall be made alive *at his coming*. Now unless words have lost their meaning since the New Testament was written, this sentence must mean, not the martyrs and confessors only, but all his saints. And when will *those who are not Christ's*, or the unholy, be raised? *Next*, or after the resurrection of the saints: so that Paul and John agree. "The last band," *to telos*, or the end or consummation of the resurrection, the last to be made alive, will be *those who are not Christ's*.

In this precious portion of Scripture, Christ is *not* spoken of as a band, or as first in order, simply, but as the first who rose from the dead by his own power as God, and as the author and efficient cause of the resurrection of the rest. The General-in-Chief not only preceded, in his resurrection, the hosts of the dead, but will himself raise them, each in his own band, at his coming. All which is in perfect keeping with the premillenarian doctrine, and with that alone. We conclude, therefore, that at Christ's coming, at the beginning of the millennium, all the holy dead shall be raised.

III. *The design of their resurrection*, or the great ends to be promoted by it.

1. It is designed by God thus *to consummate their own blessedness as his saints*; "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." The holy alone have a part in it, and they are thereby emphatically blessed. Whatever may be the happiness of saints in heaven—and it is such, no doubt, as is well adapted to disembodied souls—still, it is not of a nature to prevent an ardent desire and expectation of a better



state, as is evident from these words of the martyrs in heaven: "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Rev. 6 : 9.) And the redeemed from all lands now there expect with gratitude and joyful anticipation the glory and bliss which will be theirs when they "shall reign on the earth." (Rev. 5.) Besides, a disembodied human soul, even of the saints, is but half a man; and such departed saints must long for their complete redemption, even in heaven, as we have just seen; though, of course, such desires never disturb the settled calm or patient hope of their perfectly purified spirits, as is so often the case with the imperfectly sanctified here. Nevertheless, their blessedness as men will not be complete until they are raised from among the dead, "at the resurrection of the just," and presented before Christ as his glorious church without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish, both in body and soul. (Luke 14 : 14; Eph. 5 : 27.)

They shall also be emphatically blessed, because "on such the second death hath no power;" or, "over these the second death has no authority," that is, no legal power, no right to rule over them and destroy their blessedness. They shall not only never see the second death, or experience its pains, but that death has no right to touch them at all forever, and that because of Christ's work, as their Priest, in their stead and for their benefit. (Rom. 8 : 33, 34; 1 Thess. 1 : 40; Gal. 3 : 13.) The first death is a part of the curse of the law, consisting of all the penal evils that precede bodily death, and ending in the separation of soul and

body; and, as to the wicked, consisting also of the torments of the separate soul in hell. (Luke 16 : 23.) "The second death," the symbol of which in this prophecy is "the lake of fire," denotes the fearful and everlasting punishment of the unholy, *in their complete nature*, in hell. (19 : 20; 20 : 10, 14, 15. Compare Matt. 10 : 28.)

But with respect to all the risen saints it is declared, "Over these the second death has no authority." To escape the unspeakable and almost inconceivable agonies of the lost, and that forever, what a wonderful deliverance will it be! "Now, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, . . . *then* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Then, from a full consciousness of perfected bliss and a well-grounded persuasion of its irrevocable nature, will the whole host of the elect, in the presence of their Saviour and King, triumphantly exclaim: "Death, *where* is thy sting? Grave, *where* is thy victory?" Second death, *where* is thy authority over us? And this, for the best of reasons; for the bodies of the risen saints will be made incorruptible, glorious, powerful, and spiritual, or in all respects adapted to the perfectly sanctified spirit; in a word, like Christ's glorified body. (1 Cor. 15 : 42-49; Phil. 3 : 21.) When the unholy awake, it will be to shame and everlasting contempt; but the saints shall awake to everlasting life, shining as the stars forever and ever. (Dan. 12.)

2. It is the Divine intention, *by the risen and glorified saints, to promote the blessedness of mankind.* "They

shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." To understand this matter, or to obtain as accurate a general idea of it as possible, we should recollect that then "the throne of God and the Lamb" will be in "the New Jerusalem;" that that city is a symbol of "the Bride, the Lamb's wife," Christ's Queen, or the risen and glorified saints; that it is "the tabernacle of God with men," or that these saints are they in and by whom God, in a peculiar manner, manifests his glory to mankind, then his people. These saints are enlightened fully by God and the Lamb as to their special duties and prerogatives, and need instruction herein from no other source of illumination. (Rev. 22 : 3 ; 21 : 9-11 ; 21 : 2-3 ; 21 : 23.) Moreover, the saints descend from heaven, at the beginning of the millennium ; for, at the destruction of Babylon, "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." (19 : 7.) Now, at our Lord's second coming, and not before, will the papal antichrist, and his other implacable enemies, be destroyed. (Rev. 19 : 11-21 ; Dan. 7 : 21, 22, and 25-27 ; 2 Thess. 2 : 3-8.) The beloved city remains on earth also during the millennium, even to its termination, (20 : 9,) to say nothing of the eternal ages following.

We should, so far as the present topic is concerned, take notice that "*the nations* [of them which are saved] *shall walk in (or by) the light of it,*" that is, of the city ; and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it." (21 : 24, 26.) ("*The nations* shall walk," etc., is probably the genuine reading ; so it is in

A, B, and the Vulgate and Coptic versions. But the Syriac has it as in the English Bible.) Here, "the nations" and "the kings of the earth" (unglorified rulers subordinate to the risen saints) are distinguished from the city, or the royal priesthood. Now, *to walk in the light of the New Jerusalem* is, for the kings and nations in the flesh, to be guided by the directions or precepts which the risen saints give, as they receive them from God and Christ who enlighten them; and which they give not only as priests, but as priests and kings combined, or as the royal priesthood. In conformity with this explanation is what we read, Rev. 1 : 6, and 5 : 9, 10, namely, that "Jesus Christ, the Prince of the kings of the earth, has made," or appointed, his redeemed "kings and priests unto God, even his Father." "Thou wast slain," etc., and *hast made us unto our God kings and priests; AND WE SHALL REIGN ON THE EARTH.*"

The risen and glorified saints, then, shall be priests of God and of Christ; priests, to present the offerings, or tokens of the adoration and gratitude of the regenerated nations before the throne of God and the Lamb; priests, to bless those nations more and more by the directions they give relative to divine worship, and the whole range of human duty.

They shall also *reign with Christ*. Our Lord, indeed, will be the great King, ruling with supreme authority the nations; but the risen saints are to be his co-regents; or, by his order and appointment, they will govern the nations in the millennial age. And what better governors or priests could be desired? Who better qualified to promote the blessedness of mankind? For

these saints will be "equal to the angels," the very "highest style of men;" preëminent in intelligence, justice, benevolence, and holiness, or "shining forth like the sun in the kingdom" appointed for them by their Father in Christ.

But some ask, "*How can these things be?*" Whereas the proper question is, "*What saith the Scripture?*" Nicodemus was a ruler in Israel, a highly esteemed divine in his day, and yet he, in a conference with our Lord, had difficulties and objections to present with respect to regeneration. That subject was all dark to him. But, for all that, the doctrine of regeneration was clearly revealed in the Old Testament. It is high time for theologians to become "men of one book, and that the best," as said the meek but learned Melancthon; that is, to make Holy Scripture, not only in name and creed, but in very deed, the only infallible rule of faith and duty. Our argument as to the difficulties of the present subject is brief, but easy to be understood. It stands thus: All objections against a plainly revealed fact amount to nothing, and are worthless; but it is a plainly revealed fact that the risen saints shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years; therefore, all objections to this plainly revealed fact are worthless.

Moreover, we all know that angels often appeared among men with messages from God in former dispensations; and even of this prophecy it is written, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants what must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it" "*by his angel* to his servant John." If the angels of light, then, often appeared on



earth of old, conversed with the saints living in the flesh, and brought them directions and revelations from God ; if they are still “ ministering spirits sent for service for the sake of them who shall inherit salvation ;” if such has been and is their office-work, and that with no lowering of their dignity or bliss ; why should it be thought a thing incredible that the risen and glorified saints, “ equal to the angels,” shall perform like offices of love among the regenerated nations, and in the renovated earth ? And how could their glory or blessedness be at all tarnished thereby ? Are any of us determined to believe that the will of God is *never* to be done on earth as it is in heaven by the regenerated nations, and not even by the risen and glorified saints ? If so, two petitions of the Lord’s Prayer are prescribed for our daily use in vain.

#### OBJECTIONS.

As to the objection that the first resurrection is figurative, it has already been sufficiently refuted, and the pernicious consequences of that opinion shown. And with respect to the expression, “ *the souls* of them,” etc., it is evident that either that or a similar expression,\* or “ the dead,” could only have been used in the description of a vision concerning the departed ; and it is clear that there is no analogy or general likeness between souls absent from the body and eminent saints living in the flesh ; so that the one can not symbolize or represent the other. But how could John see souls absent from the body ? We ask, to return the logical compliment, How could the

\* *Pneumata*—spirits.

three apostles *see Moses* on the mount of transfiguration? Moses has never been raised from the dead, and yet they saw him then and there, probably in a temporary body, or what seemed to them a body, prepared by God for the occasion; and why may not John have seen the departed saints in the same or in a similar way? Peter speaks of eight souls in the ark, or eight human beings; and when John says, "I saw the souls," etc., he evidently means, I saw the departed martyrs, or they were exhibited to me in prophetic vision.

But dismissing this cavil as scarcely deserving of notice, our attention must be directed to other objections.

I. They tell us that the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked will be *simultaneous, or nearly so*; that if the wicked do not arise exactly at the same moment of time with the righteous, they will soon after. But we have proved that the first resurrection is a literal one, or that this is the inspired explanation of the vision; and also that the so-called figurative interpretation is wholly untenable. It follows, therefore, that the rest of the dead, or the unholy, will not arise until the thousand years shall be ended; and this John expressly declares in his explanatory note.

Some, however, hold that John 5: 28-29 utterly demolishes the millenarian view of the resurrection: "The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation;" (literally "*judgment*," and by im-

plication, condemnation; and "*an hour* is coming," etc.) Now, here they say it is declared that the good and the bad will be raised at once and together, or in the same hour. They affirm it, but we deny it; for nothing corresponding to the words, "in the same hour," is to be found in the text, which, of itself, is a death-blow to the objection.

Besides, our Lord is here speaking of his office and work as the great King, the Theanthropos, or God in flesh, as is evident from the immediately preceding context: "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given also to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man." (See Dan. 7.) "Marvel not at this, for an hour is coming," etc. Now, when Christ comes in the clouds of heaven, he receives from the Father authority to exercise dominion over mankind on earth, or to reign in righteousness and punish with justice. In this, the scriptural sense of the expression, the Father hath given the Son of Man authority to exercise judgment. There is no reason, therefore, why we should think it strange that all the holy dead should be raised by him, the Son of Man and the Son of God; and that the unholy dead should also be raised by him; and condemned to that punishment which their sins deserve; for how else could the Messiah, the Son of the living God, institute his kingdom on earth; how else could he, according to the Prophetic Word, reward his saints and punish his obstinate and malignant enemies?

Again, our Lord here declares, *first*, that the resurrection and the reward pertaining to *all* the righteous,

and the resurrection and punishment of *all* the wicked, shall certainly take place, and that he will effect the one and disperse the other; *secondly*, that an hour, *a set time*, an appointed season, is fixed in God's mind for both purposes, or that there is a time appointed for Christ to show the greatness of his grace and the awfulness of his justice. But the fact that the resurrection is to be *universal*, and that *an hour is fixed* for "rewarding every one according to his works," *does not prove* that it will be *simultaneous*.

II. The first resurrection will extend, say some, to the martyrs and confessors alone. The reply already given, though sufficient, may be restated and further illustrated. That it will embrace all the departed saints is evident from the following arguments:

1. The vision and explanation in Daniel 7, and that in Rev. 20:4-6, synchronize, or relate to the same epoch and era, as well as to the same persons, which may be thus exhibited. (See *J. Mede's Key and Commentary on Revelation*, translated by R. Moore. London, 1650.)

## DANIEL.

"*I beheld till the thrones were set,*" (9th ver.;) not "cast down," as in the common version.

"*The judgment was set,*" that is, the judges (by metonymy, 10th ver.) sat upon the thrones, (comp. 26th ver.)

## JOHN.

"*And I saw thrones,*" 4th ver.

"*And they sat upon them.*"

“*And judgment was given to the saints of the Most High,*” (22 ver.,) that is, kingly and judicial authority was conferred on them. (“*Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?*”)

“*And the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom,*” that is, “with the Son of Man, who came in the clouds of heaven.”

The description of the vision given by John, when thus collated with the expressions of Daniel, shows us that John meant that we should not mistake his reference to the ancient prophet. Now, Daniel predicts that the *destruction* of the fourth beast, in its last form, or with the eleventh horn, the persecuting, lawless power, the enemy of Christ and his people, will *precede* the reign of Messiah with his saints. And so does John, Rev. 19 : 20.

Daniel predicts that then Messiah will personally appear, or come in the clouds of heaven; and so does the great prophet of the present dispensation, Rev. 19 : 11-16; and that with all his saints or the hosts of his redeemed.

John says, “I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given *to them*,” that is, “*to the saints* of the Most High,” as Daniel expressly declares and John certainly means; for the hosts of the redeemed appearing with Christ he had mentioned in



the preceding vision. Daniel says, "The time came," Christ's *parousia*, "that *the saints possessed the kingdom*," and John declares that "*they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years*."

John adds by special revelation, "a thousand years," but agrees with Daniel as to the everlasting continuance of Christ's kingdom on earth, (Rev. 11 : 15;) and it was revealed to John alone that the martyrs and confessors should occupy a distinguished place in Christ's kingdom during the millennial age.

2. Besides, if the first resurrection is to be confined to the martyrs and confessors, and no others are to share in its benefits, then it follows, first, that the martyrs and confessors, and no others, are saints and blessed; for the proposition in the text is a universal affirmative. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection;" but the martyrs and confessors only have part in it, therefore, they only are blessed and holy. It also follows, from this hypothesis, that all the saints, martyrs and confessors alone excepted, will suffer everlasting punishment in their complete nature in hell. "Over these the second death hath no authority." This proposition is a universal negative. Over those who have part in the first resurrection, the second death hath no authority; but the martyrs and confessors alone have part in the first resurrection; therefore, over them alone the second death hath no authority: all which is preëminently absurd, or in direct contradiction to the didactic portions of Scripture, and to the prophecy of Daniel.

It is evident, therefore, that John's vision refers to the saints in general and to the martyrs in particular,

and that the sense is as follows: At the *parousia* of the word of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords, (19,) I beheld in prophetic vision thrones, and the saints in general who came with Christ sat upon them, and kingly and judicial authority was conferred on them; and, in particular, (for the copulative sometimes introduces a part subjoined to a whole by way of emphasis, 2 Pet. 2 : 1; Mark 1 : 5; 16 : 7; Matt. 8 : 33,) I beheld those saints who had suffered for their love to Christ, their reverence for God's word, and for their decided opposition to all forms of idolatry and man-worship, and for their utter renunciation of the claims of the civil and ecclesiastical tyrants who persecuted them to death; and they (the saints in general and the martyrs in particular who conspicuously appeared) rose from the dead, or lived in their complete nature, and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

III. Another objection is, that there is only one passage of Scripture (Rev. 20 : 4-6) where the doctrine that the resurrection of the saints shall precede that of the wicked appears to be taught; that that passage is very enigmatical, or hard to be understood; and that thus the millenarian doctrine concerning the resurrection is rendered suspicious.

But the Revelation is a prophecy by symbols, and they who are ignorant of their laws, or who disregard them, can never understand, but only pervert it. A hundred keys not fitted to a lock can never open it, but the right key does so with ease. The exposition for instance, previously given of the vision in 20 : 4, is an example of the fact that a prophecy interpreted by

the biblical laws of symbols is as intelligible and perspicuous as one in ordinary language, literal and figurative; and, in that exposition, it has been proved that the first resurrection is a literal one, or that that fact is most clearly and unquestionably taught in 20 : 4-6; and as that is a part of Holy Scripture, we are bound (since God can not lie, whether he speaks by his inspired servants once or a hundred times) to receive what is taught therein, even if were not elsewhere revealed.

But it is elsewhere revealed, and that where the doctrine of the resurrection is professedly handled. (1 Cor. 15 : 20-26.) "But now Christ has risen from the dead, the first-fruits of them that have fallen asleep. For since by man death, by man also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own band: the first-fruits, Christ; afterward, they that are Christ's at his coming; next, the last band, when he shall have given up the kingdom to God even the Father, when he shall have put down all principality, and all authority and power. (For he must reign till he put all enemies under his feet.) Death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed."

Here we are taught (1) that *all* the dead, without exception and without distinction, shall be raised by Christ; which is evident from the fact that Paul declares the resurrection by Christ is to be of the same extent as the death by Adam. As Adam was the cause of the bodily death of all that die, so will Christ be the cause of their bodily resurrection: and so our Lord himself teaches. (John 5 : 28-29.) And hence, to restrict the words, "all shall be made alive," to the saints, is to misunderstand the apostle. (2.) The second proposition of

the apostle is, that *each*, or every one, *shall be made alive in his own band*, (*tagma*, band, cohort, division of an army, for that only is the meaning of the word.) Now, *his own band* can only mean the band or company of the dead suited to his character as a believer or unbeliever, righteous or unrighteous; so that it is a general proposition, embracing the particulars that follow, and the sense is: All the dead shall be raised by Christ; but every one of the countless hosts of the dead shall be raised, and appear in that division of the great army that is suited to his character; or, each of the two classes, the holy and unholy dead, in a band by themselves. (3.) *Christ rose the first-fruits*; that is, as we understand it, *first*, and *the most excellent*, and *the pledge* of the resurrection of the rest: for by his almighty power as God he raised his human nature from the dead, and as God-Man he will hereafter raise all the dead. Thus the General-in-chief preceded in his resurrection the armies of the dead, and will be the efficient cause of the resurrection of the rest. (4.) *Afterward, they that are Christ's* shall be made alive *at his coming*, or *parousia*. *Epeita*, afterward, refers to the order or series in the resurrection, and so does *eita* in the next verse; and the apostle himself has used these words in this chapter to denote the series or order of the appearance of Christ to different persons after his resurrection, (5-7 vs.;) where *eita* is rendered in the common version "then," equivalent to *next*, and *epeita* by "after that." (Compare 1 Cor. 12 : 28 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 46 ; 1 Thess. 4 : 17 ; Mark 4 : 28.) Accordingly, it is clear that the order in the resurrection is expressed by *epeita* and *eita*, and not by *tagma*. The first band, then, to be raised after Christ,

will consist only of those who are his. (5.) *Next, the last band* shall be made alive by Christ: (*eita to telos*;) for so the elliptical expression must be supplied from the 22d verse. Now, *to telos* means strictly *the end, consummation, or completion*, but is used by Greek writers to denote a body of soldiers; and thus, for instance, in a march the end of the army would be the rear, and in a battle, the last division or company that arrived to take part in an engagement. And that *telos* is here used by Paul in the sense of last band, is evident from the preceding context; and this explanation is alone consistent with it. It can not mean the end of the world or earth, for an expression corresponding thereto is not to be found in the Greek Testament; and what our translators have rendered "the end of the world," means "the end of the age." But Paul here sets before us the armies of the dead; of all the dead. The Great General has already risen, the efficient cause of the resurrection of the rest; and every one of these shall be made alive by him in his own band; they that are Christ's, at his coming, or the band of the just, in the morning of the millennium; they who are not Christ's, or the last band that shall be made alive, next, or after the resurrection of the just. And thus Paul and John perfectly agree.

This is confirmed from what follows: The last band shall be made alive "when he shall have given up the kingdom," etc.; but the kingdom or government here meant can not be that kingdom on earth which Christ will receive from the Father at his second advent; for that is expressly declared to be everlasting. (Dan. 7 and Rev. 11.) It must refer, therefore, to his associa-



tion with God in the government of the universe, or of the heavenly worlds; that government he will resign when the last band of the dead shall be made alive, but not his everlasting kingdom on earth. The last band will be made alive "when he shall have put down all principality," etc.; that is, Satan and his angels, and all his enemies, and when even the wicked shall live in indestructible bodies; all which agrees well with Rev. 20 : 7-15, as all but the prejudiced may see.

IV. As to the design of the resurrection of the saints, or the great ends to be promoted by it, all admit that thereby their own blessedness as saints will be consummated. But many, with the sand of prejudice blown repeatedly by uninspired teachers on their mental eyeballs, see very dimly, and some not at all, the exceeding glory of the risen saints as revealed in holy Scripture. Others, in their blindness and from a mistaken zeal, ridicule what God has been pleased to reveal of the reign of the saints on earth. But "ridicule" is not "the test of truth," although irony may set forth the folly of abominable error. (1 Kings 18 : 27.)

We do not hold ourselves responsible for what dreamy, self-conceited men have, after a superficial and hasty glance at Scripture, either spoken or written on this topic, or any other appertaining to the millenarian doctrine; for it is well known that such advocates appear on both sides, and that they will have their say, their will, and their way, notwithstanding the judgment of the more learned and discriminating. "This is a sore evil under the sun," but common to many theological schools. But our view of prophecy

*as to the relations of the glorified and unglorified in Christ's kingdom*, is briefly exhibited in the preceding essay; and for that we are responsible.

Now, what are the objections to it? Valid ones, we mean. Will it be said that *that* is simply our view of the matter, or that no such facts are revealed? We answer thus: (1.) It is revealed that Christ, at his second advent, will establish his everlasting kingdom on earth; and that then nations and rulers living in the flesh shall be sanctified, and serve him. (Dan. 7 : 13-14, 27 vs., with Matt. 26 : 63-64; Ps. 72 : 6-11, 17 vs.) (2.) It is also revealed that all the departed saints are to come with him to the earth, their corruptible bodies made incorruptible and glorious; and that these, the risen and glorified saints, are to reign with him over mankind, not only during the millennium, but forever and ever. (Dan. 7 : 18, 22, 27 vs.; Rev. 5 : 8-10; 22 : 5; 1 Cor. 15; 1 Thess. 3 : 13.) (3.) It is revealed that then the Throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in the New Jerusalem, or amidst these glorified saints; so that then Christ will sit at God's right hand on earth as really as he does now in heaven. (Rev. 22 : 3.) (4.) It was revealed to John that the glorified saints, and especially the martyrs, should be not only kings, but priests of God and of Christ *during the thousand years*. (Rev. 1 : 6; 5 : 10; 20 : 6.) (5.) It is also revealed that the nations, sanctified by the Spirit of the Father and the Son, with their unglorified rulers, are to be their subjects, or those over whom the risen and glorified saints, under Christ, are to reign. (22 : 1; 21 : 24-26.) (6.) That the royal priesthood, or the glorified saints, will be fully taught by God and

Christ as to their special duties and prerogatives as kings and priests of the future inhabited earth, and will need instruction herein from no other source of illumination: "The city hath no need of the sun, nor of the moon, that they should shine for it; for the glory of God lightened it, and its lamp (was) the Lamb." (Tisch. N. T. ed. 7.) And also that the nations will be thus guided by the glorified, or walk by the light of the city. (Rev. 21 : 23-24.)

Some, indeed, have ventured to affirm that it *would be highly unbecoming* for the unglorified, or the nations, to have constant access to the glorified saints, or royal priesthood. But we read of the twelve gates of the city, three at the east, three at the north, three at the south, and three at the west; with twelve angels, or messengers, near the gates, and the inscription on the gates of the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel, (Rev. 21 : 12-13;) also, that the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honor into it; and its gates shall not be shut by day, for there shall be no night there; and that the kings of the earth shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it. (24-26 vs.) The explanation of these symbols is happily, and, as we think, accurately expressed by D. N. Lord; "The gates symbolize the access to the glorified which the nations are to enjoy. That they are distributed equally to the several sides, indicates that the glorified are to be accessible alike to the nations wherever they may reside; that there is to be no night there; that they are never to be without the visible presence of God," or of God in Christ; "that its gates are never

shut; that the nations are to enjoy uninterrupted access to the glorified; and that an angel is stationed at each gate; that that access is to be subject to conditions, and regulated by an exalted order assigned to that office;" or that their intercourse with the glorified is to be subject to such conditions and be regulated by such agents as the great King may appoint.

"The twelve tribes of the sons of Israel are the symbols in the vision of the sealing of all the branches or families of pure worshipers. The inscription of the names of those tribes on the gates, denotes, accordingly, that all branches of the unglorified race are to have access to the glorified saints, but each with a part or division peculiarly appropriated to themselves; as in a walled city inhabited by different tribes, the inscription on separate gates of the names of the several tribes would imply that each tribe was to pass through the gate distinguished by its name."

Now, in the symbolic prophecy from which the citations have been made, "a new heaven" denotes new rulers, even the glorified saints, "and a new earth," new subjects or the sanctified nations; "and there was no more sea," means no violent revolutions, agitations, or wars among the nations. (To explain Rev. 21 : 1 of our physical globe is wholly inadmissible; for there we have a revelation by symbols seen in vision, and described in the past tense; not a mere language-prophecy, as in Isa. 65 : 17; 66 : 22, which predict a physical renovation of our world.) After this general description of the future rulers and the ruled, and the peace thence ensuing, there follows a particular description of these glorified rulers, and

their relations to the unglorified but sanctified nations.

Now, what is meant by the "Holy City, New Jerusalem"? The *inspired explanation* of the symbol is, "*the Bride, the Lamb's wife*;" "*the tabernacle of God with men*." And, pray, who will be Christ's Queen but his elect church; or those who have been effectually called by his Word and Spirit, from the fall up to his second advent, and whom Christ is then to bring with him? These, with incorruptible and glorious bodies, united to their perfectly sanctified spirits, will be his Bride; in a word, the risen and glorified saints. (Dan. 7 : 1; Thess. 4 : 14; Rev. 5 : 8-10; 20 : 4-6.) And nothing in the didactic portions of Scripture is more clearly revealed than that these will be the Bride of the future King of the earth. (Compare Eph. 5 : 25-27; Phil. 3 : 20-21.) "For our *politeuma* is in heaven, from whence also as the Saviour we expect the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall transform the body of our humiliation conformed to the body of his glory," etc. (Tischendorf, N. T.) Paul, in this context, exhorts the Philippians to imitate him, and those who take him as their model, or example. The first motive is presented in 18-19 vs.; the second, in the words before us. *Politeuma* is generally held to mean citizenship; and when the apostle wrote, the citizens alone (in the Greek cities slaves and foreign residents were excluded) were members of the government, or had a share in its administration. Accordingly, we take *politeuma* here to mean a body of citizens in the then sense of the word, the multitude of the saints in heaven; and would render it *government*, or *commonwealth*; government being



used by metonymy for governors or rulers. Thus the sense is : The body of the saints with whom we are associated in mind and heart are now in heaven ; those saints with whom we expect to reign on earth, when Christ comes to complete our salvation at the resurrection of the just ; we expect them, and not them alone, but Him also the Lord and King. The other inspired explanation of the City leads to the same conclusion : "*the tabernacle of God with men.*" As God manifested his presence in a visible and glorious manner to the Israelites in and by the tabernacle, so he will, in and by the glorified saints, to mankind, then his people.

The city's *descent* from heaven to earth represents the coming of the saints to our world ; and this will be at the destruction of Babylon, or at Christ's *parousia*. (19 : 7, with 21 : 2 ; 19 : 11-16.)

*The gates of the city are never shut ; the kings of the earth bring the glory and honor of the nations into it ; and the nations walk by its light ;* and the names of all these sanctified nations, or *the twelve tribes of Israel* are written on its gates ; for these nations and kings are all holy, and enter it because they were predestinated to such glory and blessedness, *their names being written in the Lamb's book of life.*

Now, *what is there unbecoming* in these relations of the glorified and unglorified in Christ's kingdom ? Is it no honor to be the Bride of Christ, and God's tabernacle with mankind, then his people ? And who can suppose that the glorified saints will not be properly qualified for priests and kings in the renovated earth, and among sanctified nations ? Will not the instructions they receive from The Lamb, personally present,

to say nothing of their previous training by the Holy Ghost, be abundantly sufficient for this end? And how can the dignity or blessedness of the glorified royal priesthood be at all lowered or lessened by moving among and guiding, as the Theanthropos directs, nations baptized by the Holy Ghost, and unacquainted with sorrow or death? And when they, as priests, present before the Throne of God and the Lamb, the offerings or tokens of the adoration and gratitude of the redeemed and purified nations, will that take away from their glory, or annihilate their happiness?

And how can it be unbecoming the unglorified kings and nations to walk by the light of such a city, or be guided in the way of truth, holiness, and bliss by the glorified, directly taught and qualified for their office by God and Christ? (21 : 23-24.) And why should not these sanctified kings and nations have constant access to the glorified in every part of the earth, as God prescribes or orders? Will it be no benefit or advantage to those still living in the flesh? And can it be any detriment to those who shine as the sun in the kingdom appointed for them by their Father in Christ? How strange it is that such wonderful and delightful predictions of the glory to be revealed at the appearing and kingdom of Christ are ever spoken of as *unbecoming*! How sublime these predictions are, and how true! (22 : 6.) And who would not desire to be a partaker of this glory? Let us, therefore, each in our several places and callings, serve well our Redeemer; "and, when the Chief Shepherd has appeared, we shall receive the crown of glory that can not fade," the glory of kings and priests in his everlasting kingdom.

J. T. D.

## ESSAY XIV.

### THE JUDGMENT OF THE LIVING NATIONS.

As to "the day of judgment," it is written that "the Lord Jesus Christ will judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom," or when he appears to establish his kingdom. (2 Tim. 4 : 1.)

The biblical idea of the day of judgment in its chief features or general outlines having been given in a former essay, we now proceed to inquire into the meaning of Matt. 25 : 31-46.

This portion of Scripture is not an allegorical description of the judgment spoken of, but one conveyed in ordinary language, literal and figurative. The figures found in it, however, are very few, namely, a simile in the 32d verse, and two elliptical metaphors in the 33d verse. The word "throne" is also used, by metonymy, for the sign or outward indication of Christ's presence as king of the earth, and "fire" is used by a metaphor and metonymy combined, for the place of severest punishment, as in the expression, "the blackness of darkness." (2 Pet. 2 : 17.)

The dialogue between the king and those judged is no valid objection to this view, since the modest astonishment of the one class, and the vain excuse of the

other, are both perfectly natural in the circumstances, and such as may, and perhaps will, literally and actually occur; for who can be sentenced to everlasting punishment without attempting some defense, however vain? And who can hear, from the lips of Christ, of the kingdom as prepared for him, without giving expression to the most unfeigned, adoring, humble astonishment? Moreover, it is impossible for this portion of Scripture to be an allegory, because an allegory is never described in the future, but always in the past tense.

“When the Son of Man hath come (or, shall have come) in his glory, and all the (holy) angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory.” The king and judge here spoken of is the Son of Man, the rightful lord of the whole earth, (Dan. 7 : 13-14,) to whom as Messiah, by divine right, our world and its inhabitants belong. (Ps. 2.) *His coming* will be “*in his glory*,” as the God-Man, the king, (34 and 40 vs.) and hence it refers to his second coming, as is almost universally admitted. It is evident also from the fact that “then he shall sit on *the throne of his glory*,” or his glorious throne, as distinguished from the Father’s, on which he now sits in heaven. (Rev. 3 : 21, with Matt. 19 : 28.) His retinue will consist of *all the angels*. (The word “holy” is wanting in many ancient manuscripts.) They will be the ministers of his will, the doers of his behests, (Ps. 103 : 21 ;) the adorers of his person, and the approvers of his kingly and judicial acts; for “When he bringeth again” (or the second time) “the First Born,” the lord or king, into the inhabited earth, he saith, Let all the angels of God wor-

ship him. (Heb. 1 : 6, Gr.) (Elsewhere we are told that Christ will bring with him, as co-regents, all the departed saints. Zech. 14 : 5 ; 1 Thess. 3 : 13 and 4 : 13-14 ; Rev. 19 : 11-14, with 20 : 4-6.)

“And before him shall be gathered all the nations :” this gathering or assembling before the Son of Man is not said to be simultaneous, or at one time and place.’ “The language does not imply it ;” it simply declares the certainty of the gathering when Christ has come, and “will be perfectly verified by the assembling of the nations before him, though it be in different scenes and successively. And why should the population of Europe, Africa, America, and the Pacific and Indian isles, be transported to Asia to be judged ?—a process that, unless accomplished by a miracle, would occupy many years, far more indeed than an ordinary lifetime even of the aged, and demand extraordinary provisions for the subsistence and shelter of those collected at the scene, while the gathering was in progress. Such a voyage and march of nine hundred millions of human beings to a single point on the globe, would involve, in truth, an array of miracles, compared with which all that have hitherto been wrought in the government of the world would sink into insignificance ; and is not to be thought of. The judgment of the nations will doubtless take place in their several territories, and in succession.” (D. N. Lord.)

The division or separation of the judged will be according to their moral character. Of this the King will be perfectly competent to judge, since to his omniscient eye all hearts are laid bare, and all actions manifest, and it will also be unmistakably evident from their



former behavior. Hence, Christ describes them, by elliptical metaphors, as "sheep" and "goats;" and the former in literal terms as "the righteous," (46 ver.) He calls the righteous sheep, to denote their harmlessness, and their willing obedience to and imitation of him. He calls the wicked goats, to denote the manifestations made by them of their gross and abominable depravity.

The right hand is used in dispensing gifts, the left is never so employed. (Bush's "Illustrations of Scripture," on Ps. 77 : 10.) The position of the sheep and goats before Christ intimates, therefore, that royal favors are to be given to the one class, but not to the other, and hence it is a significant indication of what is to follow.

The awards of the judgment with the reasons on which it is founded are described in 34-45 vs. *As to the righteous*, the King will declare that they are the rightful heirs of the kingdom, appointed to obtain its blessings by the Father, gladly welcomed by Christ, and directed by him to enter on the possession thereof. "Come, ye blessed," etc. "*Inherit the kingdom*," that is, enter on the possession of the realm belonging to me as Messiah. (Compare Matt. 5 : 5.) *Basileia*, translated "kingdom," often signifies realm or territory belonging to a king. (See Matt. 4 : 8; Mark 6 : 23; Luke 4 : 5.) "The kingdom *prepared for you from the foundation of the world*," that is, appointed from eternity for you.

The reason on which this decision is founded is their sympathetic practical love shown to Christ's brethren when distressed and persecuted: "for I was hungry,"

etc., (35-36 vs.,) and which he will graciously reward as if he had been personally so treated.

The reply of the righteous in an interrogative form happily expresses their unfeigned surprise, their genuine humility, and their adoring gratitude for "the exceeding riches of his grace," so wonderfully manifested to them.

*As to the wicked*, the sentence of the king will be, "Depart, ye cursed," etc. They are addressed as accursed, or condemned to punishment, and fitted by their sins for it. This punishment will consist in their being driven away from Christ, and from the earth, his realm or kingdom, into hell, where they will suffer unspeakable anguish. Their punishment will, at last, be aggravated by being associated with the devil and his angels in everlasting fire, the fire *prepared*, that is, appointed, for the fallen angels, but into which the goats will be first cast, and afterward these angels. (Compare Rev. 20 : 10.)

The reason on which this sentence will be founded is their want of sympathy and practical love to Christ's brethren, and therefore a want of love to Christ himself. (Compare 1 Cor. 16 : 22.)

Their reply in an interrogative form strikingly expresses their self-righteous spirit, their swollen pride, and the baseless pretext of their lacking opportunities to manifest the state of their hearts toward him.

The execution of the sentence as to both classes : "And these shall depart" (go away from Christ, 41 ver.) "into punishment everlasting, but the righteous into life everlasting." ("*Everlasting punishment*" is the explanation of "*everlasting fire*." ) There the same

word is used to express the duration of the sinful and miserable condition of the wicked, and the duration of the holy and blissful state of the righteous; and hence it is certain that Universalism is a destructive heresy. (See 2 Pet. 2 : 1-9.)

Now, *who* are to be gathered before Christ to be judged? The answer is, "*all the nations*;" which means, say most interpreters, all mankind without exception. 1. But this is a manifest error. For it is, in the first place, clean contrary to biblical usage; there being not a passage in Scripture where it has that signification. The phrase, "*the nations*," is never used to designate the departed; nor is it ever employed to describe men as raised from the grave; but it always denotes men on earth, or *the living population* of our world under some form of government. Take the following texts as specimens of this truth: "By these were the nations divided." (Gen. 10 : 32.) "Thou shalt be a father of many nations." (Gen. 17 : 4.) "He shall judge between the nations." (Isa. 2 : 4.) "They shall be wanderers among the nations." (Hos. 9 : 17.) "For all these things do the nations of the world seek for;" the nations belonging to our world. (Luke 12 : 30.) "Upon the earth" there shall be "distress of nations with perplexity." (Luke 21 : 25.) "To him will I give authority over the nations." (Rev. 2 : 26.) "The leaves of the tree, for the healing of the nations." (Rev. 22 : 2.) "The nations," then, in this prophecy must mean only the living population of the globe. To depart here from the invariable signification of the phrase would be inadmissible as well as dishonest.

In the second place, it is certain that the common interpretation is erroneous, since it violates the law of the simile: "And he shall separate (or divide) them from one another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats;" which proves that the separation will be literally effected; or that the inhabitants composing the nations spoken of will be set apart in classes according to their moral character, as a shepherd separates the sheep and goats which before pastured in common.

Moreover, that the aforesaid interpretation is erroneous, is evident from what is elsewhere proved as to the resurrection and reign of the holy dead at the beginning of the thousand years, and of the resurrection and judgment of the unholy dead when those years are finished. So evident it is that the judgment spoken of in this prophecy must relate only to those who shall be living on earth when Messiah appears.

2. Others (as Olshausen, Alford, and Stier) hold that those who are to be judged, as described in this prophecy, are the heathen or unevangelized. This opinion, however, is altogether untenable, because our Lord evidently takes it for granted that the judged had opportunity to acquire a knowledge of himself, and to show by their behavior to his brethren whether they loved or despised him. But a knowledge of Christ, and a manifestation of love or contempt to his brethren, is morally impossible for those to whom the Gospel has never come. (Rom. 10 : 14.) It is indisputable, therefore, that *the evangelized portion of mankind* are intended, and *all* of them to whom the gospel of the kingdom has been preached.

All these evangelized inhabitants of the earth, who shall be living when Christ has come, and sits on his glorious throne, are then to be judged; and they will have shown the state of their hearts toward Christ by their treatment of his brethren in *the affliction or persecution that shall take place just before his advent.* (35–36 vers. and 42–43 vers.) Accordingly, they will be enabled to give most decided and unequivocal proofs of their love to Christ, or of their aversion to him.

We conclude, therefore, that those who are to be judged, as described in this prediction, are not all mankind without exception; that they are not those who lived and died ignorant of the Gospel, or who never had the Scriptures in their hands; but all the evangelized inhabitants of the earth who shall be living at Christ's second advent, and at the time of "the great tribulation" or persecution that will shortly precede his glorious appearing, and who have taken a decided part in it either for or against Christ's brethren, by practical sympathy or the want of it. These are the subjects of the judgment here foretold, and these exclusively.

#### OBJECTIONS.

1. If this conclusion be true, over what nations is Christ to reign; for "when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18 : 8.)

In reply, we refer the reader to what has been said on this text in the fourth essay. Moreover, it seems



clear that Christ in these words intimates, not that no believers at all shall then exist, (for we know that then living saints shall be changed from mortal to immortal, 1 Cor. 15,) but that they will be comparatively few. The same thing is implied in Matt. 24 : 30; Rev. 1 : 7.

As to the nations over whom Christ is then to reign, it is certain "that there are to be multitudes of the unconverted who are to survive the destruction at Christ's coming of his open and remorseless enemies; which is indicated in several passages of the prophets. (Isa. 66 : 19; Zech. 14 : 16-19.) That some of all nations are to live and become the subjects of Christ's rule after that judgment, is taught in many predictions. Thus, at Christ's coming he is to be invested with a dominion that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. (Dan. 7 : 14.) It is announced in the Apocalypse—at the seventh trumpet, when the saints who have died are to be raised and receive their reward—that the kingdom of the world has become the Messiah's. And after the descent of the New Jerusalem, the nations are said to walk in its light, bear to it their gifts, and be healed by the leaves of its trees of life. That multitudes of nations are therefore to survive his coming, and still live in the natural body, is clear; and that fact is consistent with the prediction in Matthew, that all such as have shown that they are his disciples or his enemies by their treatment of his brethren in their persecutions, are then to be adjudged according to their character to everlasting blessedness or punishment." The unevangelized, then, who are to be sanctified at Christ's advent, with their descendants,

will compose the nations over whom our Lord is to reign.

2. But will not the judgment portrayed in this prophecy be a judgment of nations, in *distinction* from that of individuals of whom they consist?

We answer, No ; for “how could whole nations be at the same juncture, hungry, thirsty, destitute of clothes, without shelter, sick, and *in prison* ? But this is placed beyond question by Christ’s answer to the inquiry by each class, when they had exerted the acts which he ascribes to them—that inasmuch as they had done them unto *one* of the least of his brethren, they had done them to him.” And “how could whole nations, as such, give food, drink, clothing, and shelter to individuals in such a condition ; attend them in sickness, and visit them in prison ?” Besides, how could whole nations, as such, be cast into everlasting fire, or be sent away to endure everlasting punishment ?

But who are Christ’s brethren, as distinguished from the righteous, in this prediction ? In our judgment, they are the saints who shall be put to death in the great tribulation just before the advent, but who, then risen and glorified, shall be with Christ. To them the King will point and say, “Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of *these my brethren*, ye did it unto me.”

And who, then, are “the righteous” ? In our judgment, not the church or disciples, strictly speaking, for they are the afflicted in the great persecution, but those among the evangelized who shall be converted by witnessing the meekness, steadfastness, and patience of the suffering saints, and who shall, when converted, begin and continue fearlessly to minister unto them. (Hebrews 6 : 10.)

J. T. D.

## ESSAY XV.

### THE BLESSEDNESS OF THE NATIONS DURING THE MILLENNIUM.

It is our present design to treat only of the happiness of the nations during the millennium, that is, of those who shall then be living in the flesh, or with bodies not yet glorified.

I. *The chief sources of their bliss.* 1. The most delightful and highest source of their blessedness will be derived from *the presence of Christ*, the God-Man, the Prince of the kings of the earth, the Redeemer and Saviour of the world. God as God, or in his pure essence, is invisible to all intelligent beings in all worlds, and must be so, from the very nature of the case, to all eternity. (1 Tim. 1 : 17, and 6 : 16.) Were it possible for creature eyes to behold the unvailed essence of God—which it is not—their annihilation would instantly follow. (Ex. 33 : 20.) Ever since the creation of the universe, indeed, Jehovah has given unmistakable tokens and manifestations of his eternal power and Godhead; but to see God in the mirror of his works, and to see him as he is in himself, are very different things. Irreverent and shallow speculators may discourse of intuition or pure reason (or whatever they

may choose to call it) as that faculty of man by which he gazes on the essence of God; but it is a nonentity of which no man in his senses is conscious. The Absolute God, or God as he is in himself, is invisible and incomprehensible to all creatures; but Jesus Christ is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the stamp, or exactness of his essence; he is the image or portrait of the invisible God; he that sees him sees the Father, or obtains the clearest and most accurate knowledge of the divine perfections by beholding God in Christ. (Heb. 1 : 3; Col. 1 : 15; John 14 : 7-10.) And *Him* the regenerated nations will see. They will behold, not the absolute God, but the relative God, the Theanthropos, their Redeemer and Lord; for at that era he will be personally present on earth, and in its metropolis show forth his glory in a peculiar manner to the nations. (Jer. 31 : 38-40; Zech. 14 : 9-11; Isa. 24 : 23; Mic. 4 : 1-8; Isa. 2 : 1-4.) And this intercourse with Christ will be Paradise restored, and a heavenly state on earth. What regenerated person now exists in our world who does not ardently desire to see Jesus, and to fall at his feet in adoring gratitude? And how can any suppose that a regenerated world will be destitute of such a desire, or without the means and opportunities of gratifying it, when the great Redeemer-King is personally present on earth, and his kingdom coextensive with it? Indeed, it is expressly revealed, as some of the passages above referred to show, that the nations (probably by their representatives) will flow to the metropolis of the renovated earth, or multitudes go, as wave follows wave, to see the King in his beauty, to worship him, to learn more fully his will, and to do it.

How natural, then, will it be for them to fall at their Redeemer's feet, and say, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" (Ps. 8 : 1.)

2. The other principal source of their bliss will be derived from *the kingdom of Christ then established, with all its attendant blessings*. This kingdom, associating heavenly glory with earthly blessedness, will, in its administration, be characterized by perfect righteousness, justice, and beneficence, and also by the greater wisdom; for the supreme control and direction thereof will be in the hands of him "in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," and all the plenitude of human perfection preëminently. (Col. 2 : 9; Ps. 45 : 2.) (As specimens of these characteristics of his reign, see Ps. 45 and 72; Isa. 11.)

The glorified co-regents of Immanuel in this holy and beneficent government of the nations will be the risen saints, together with the transformed saints, or those changed from mortal to immortal at Christ's second coming; though the risen saints will be the more exalted of these co-regents, and exercise a more extensive sway under Christ, as is revealed, Rev. 21. (Compare 1 Thess. 4 : 15-17.) It is abundantly evident that a constant source of bliss to the nations will be derived from these, the loftiest and holiest of mankind; for the nations shall walk in the light of the city, or their conduct will be regulated by the directions and precepts which these co-regents give as they receive the same from God and Christ, who enlighten them. The gates of the city are ever open, (under well-known regulations and agents, symbolized by an angel standing at each gate,) and the nations, with their kings, or un-



glorified rulers, enter into it; that is, they have constant access to the risen and glorified saints. Now, these glorified priests and kings constitute the tabernacle of God with mankind, then his people; and hence these co-regents and priests will be in every part of the earth, most able and willing to guide the nations in the way of life, or bear to them all the divine precepts, promises, revelations, or explanations of previous revelations which they may need in that state of the world. What a copious fountain of gladness will it be for the nations to receive communications from God and Christ, by the agency of those who, in intellect, condescension, love, and righteousness, are "equal to the angels"! What a holy, admirably adjusted, and perfect form of government will then be established! With what wisdom, kindness, and impartiality will it be administered! In former dispensations they sometimes "entertained angels unawares," and when from the first they knew them to be angels; but in the millennial era, it is highly probable that John 1 : 52 will be literally fulfilled, and absolutely certain that the regenerated nations will be permitted to hold perpetual intercourse with the risen and glorified saints, who will be in no respects inferior to the angels. Moreover, no small spring of the bliss of the nations will arise from holding converse with the transformed saints, equal in knowledge and holiness to our first parents as they stood in Eden, radiant with the image of God. Happy world, whose God, Saviour, and King will be Immanuel, and his royal priesthood the risen and transformed saints!

Subordinate to the risen saints will be "the kings of

the earth" or the unglorified but sanctified rulers of the nations; for they are distinguished both from the city and the nations, and are described as in willing subjection to the city. (Rev. 21 : 24-26.) And how great a blessing to mankind such unglorified but truly holy rulers will be, let the history of our world since the fall declare—a history in almost every page characterized by indisputable indications of selfishness, lawless ambition, oppression, and blood.

The banishment from earth and destruction of all the antichristian powers, civil and ecclesiastical, will also greatly promote the joy of the nations in the millennial era. Tyrants and despotic governments will then be no more. (Isaiah 2 : 10-22; Dan. 7 : 21-27; Rev. 11 : 15-18, and 19 : 19-21.) Like wild beasts have these antichristian powers prowled in our world, with the nations, or down-trodden millions, under their feet—their will, law; and the happiness of the people talked of, but not regarded. During the millennium, however, not one of these tyrants will remain on earth. Accordingly, the regenerated nations, or the saints living in the flesh, will not be exposed to oppression, contempt, or persecution; no longer be "as lambs among wolves;" no longer pining away in dismal dungeons, writhing on racks, or at the burning stake; wandering no more in deserts and mountains, or in dens and caves of the earth; but ever under the eye of the Chief Shepherd himself, together with the glorified and unglorified rulers appointed by him. Then a redeemed and sanctified world will, with a voice like that of mighty thunderings, say: "Alleluia! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

Then, also, "the King of kings and Lord of lords" will "make wars to cease to the ends of the earth." The nations will convert the weapons of war into instruments of agriculture, and the science and art of war wholly be blotted out as utterly useless in a world where all love God, Christ, and holiness, and one another. No more will there be garments rolled in blood, and thousands dying quick as a lightning-flash amid the smoke and tumult of battle; or, by inches, in fields and hospitals. No more will the wail of anguish burst forth from widows' and orphans' hearts over loved ones slain. For then the Prince of peace shall reign; then the hymn sung by the angels at the birth of our Redeemer will receive its full accomplishment: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

Moreover, in that "world to come" whereof we speak, not one unclean and malignant spirit will be left on earth. It was by the instigation of the devil that the race fell; and this old serpent, who, at the very origin of mankind, showed his subtilty with such dreadful success, has never ceased from exhibiting decided proofs of his ever-growing hostility. He, in connection with the foul spirits under his control, has been the chief author and upholder of idolatry among men. In the antediluvian world, he soon succeeded in thus deceiving the nations and in kindling the fire of hate in human breasts, so that the earth was not only "corrupt before God," but "filled with violence."

It was no better when the world started afresh, peopled by the sons of Noah; for the great design of God in calling Abraham and settling his descendants in

Canaan was to prevent idolatry, with its attendant vices, from becoming absolutely universal, and to raise up a church and nation to whom he might give his oracles, and from whom, as to the flesh, the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, might come. The history of Israel, however, shows how actively employed Satan and his angels were, even among that people, while all the other nations lay, so to speak, fast asleep in their arms.

And after the Eternal Son had become incarnate, died for our sins, and ascended into heaven, even from that day to this, these subtle and wicked spirits have been ever at work to deceive men and nations of men. In the apostolic age and century following, they, in an especial manner, went about as roaring lions, and stirred up men to become persecutors; and accordingly, by fire and sword, by rack and dungeon, their deceived ones attempted to drive from the earth those who feared God and loved Christ, and who sought by all means to save some of their brethren. And we all know that Babylon has been drunk with the blood of the saints for more than a thousand years already, and that not without Satanic enticement and help.

By the temptations of the fallen angels inflaming the pride and unholy ambition of the teachers of the visible church, errors and heresies of every kind and name have been propagated; sound doctrine, as prophets and apostles taught it, discarded; and the curiosity of men so unduly excited and wrongly directed that their ears itch to hear something esteemed new, even if no better than old wives' fables. Besides, wherever the Gospel, in its great parts and connections,

is faithfully proclaimed, there these abominable fowls of the air hasten to snatch up the seed and bear it away. There the deceivers bolster up their dupes with false hopes, who thus are made a crowd of mere temporary professors of the faith; or else they hinder the growth of the good seed by exciting the rank shooting up of worldly cares and pleasures, so that they who bear fruit, thirty, sixty, or an hundred-fold, are, alas! comparatively few. Meagre and incomplete indeed is this description of the effects of Satanic temptation and agency; yet enough has been said to show how unspeakably blessed mankind will be when freed from the necessity of wrestling with principalities, powers, and troops of malignant spirits.

II. The *subordinate sources* of their bliss. The home of the sanctified will contribute elements to the blessedness of its inhabitants. After the murder of Abel what pleasure could Cain take in external things? What joy could he feel in forests and fields, in lakes and streams, and all "the fair variety of things" that everywhere met his eyes? Alas! remorse, the undying worm, was gnawing at his heart, and the voice of his brother's blood was crying unto God from the ground for vengeance, and Cain always heard it in the ear of his conscience. He carried the earnest and foretaste of hell within him, and how could he be happy? And how can any be blessed without love to God and Christ and love to one another? But when mankind shall be renewed after the image of God, and dwell in our new-created world, then they will take as much and as pure delight in it as did our first parents in Eden, if not more.



Their exemption from certain penal evils will extend their peace like a river; for in that day there will be no exhausting labor nor poverty, neither will children grow up in an unconverted state. "They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they shall be the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them." These words describe a part of the blessedness of restored and converted Israel, but, by parity of reason, we may infer the same concerning the other holy nations. In that day also and in that world to come, "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick," "and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." (Isaiah 33 : 24; Rev. 21 : 4.) Although the bodies of the sanctified nations will be capable of death, still they will not die, because "the leaves of the tree of life are for the healing of the nations"—that is, for effecting a thorough cure of their mortality. At what precise time their change from mortal to immortal will take place is not revealed, but the fact of the change is unquestionably foretold. (Rev. 22 : 2.) Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, and establish thy kingdom on earth, that men may be blessed in thee, and all nations call thee blessed. (Psalm 72 : 17.)

J. T. D.

## ESSAY XVI.

### EVENING OF THE DAY OF JUDGMENT, THE SECOND RESURRECTION.

WHEN the millennial age shall have passed away, the world will behold another series of important events before the final consummation of everlasting happiness in which our race shall go on to multiply and replenish the redeemed earth, secure from sin and all its consequential evils. To the consideration of these we devote this essay.

I. *The release of Satan.* "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison." (Rev. 20 : 7.)

In a former essay on the binding of Satan, it was clearly shown that the Devil and his angels are meant, and that the whole significance of the symbolic language descriptive of his imprisonment, is *explained* by the Holy Spirit to this intent, "that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled." Here it will not be impertinent to ask: After the lapse of so many centuries of the gospel dispensation, what has hindered, and what now hinders the conversion of the world? The answer is, the deceptions of Satan. He is called "the god of this world, who blinds the minds of them which believe not,

lest the light of the glorious gospel should shine unto them." (2 Cor. 4 : 4.) Paul said : " We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against *the world-rulers of the darkness of this age, against wicked spirits on high.*" (Eph. 6 : 12.) (See the Greek.) To explain this, we refer to other passages where he is called " the prince of this world," and " the prince of the power of THE AIR." Strange as it may seem, it thus appears that the very atmosphere of this world is the sphere whence diabolical influences emanate to delude its inhabitants. But this is not all, the church itself is exposed to the craft of Satan. The whole world is now open to gospel effort ; the church is rich, and able to send multitudes of missionaries to all the unevangelized nations. Why does she not do it ? Because of the delusions of Satan. No one can deny it. Her efforts are just enough to quiet her conscience with the belief that she is doing great things for the cause of her Master ; but they are not enough to effect much against the delusions of Satan. Thus his craft avails to quiet her in her inadequacy of effort, as far removed from *self-denial* as the heavens are from the earth ; and to keep the nations under his own malign influence.

But for what purpose is he to be bound ? The reason given above, proves that the world will not be converted so long as he is loose, and going about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. During the period of the millennium, he, with his hosts, having been cast out from the air, and shut up in an abyss, far removed from the scenes of his hellish labors, the nations of the earth will be speedily converted when the Son of Man shall come.

But after the period aforesaid, he shall be loosed out of his prison for a little season. Why? *That he may again deceive the nations.* The all-wise God has reasons for this, which he has not seen fit to reveal to us; but which unquestioning faith regards as amply sufficient to justify his ways. He might have prevented Satan in the first instance from deceiving "the mother of all living;" why he did not, is as great a mystery as the release of Satan after the period aforesaid can be. We take the facts as given to us, and rest content with the assurance that what we know not now, we shall know hereafter.

II. *Consequences.* Although we are not specifically informed in detail what these shall be, yet we have the experience of the past to lead us to believe that the arch-fiend will resume his place and plans of operations so successfully carried on since the fall of our first parents, just as soon as he is loosed from his prison.

1. The AIR will again become the abode of wicked spirits, and physical as well as moral evil rapidly be spread through the earth. The malevolent passions of men will again be aroused by the instigation of the old deceiver, and the result will be the terrible conflict which it is revealed will take place within the domain of the land of Israel.

2. This mighty effort of Satan is thus predicted: "He shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city." (Rev. 20 : 8-9.)

Before entering upon the explanation of this abstruse passage, we will first attend to a difficulty which seems to encumber the whole subject. The question is often asked, Where is this mighty host to come from, since the world will have become the abode of peace and holiness? Do we not read that swords shall be beaten into plowshares, and spears into pruning-hooks, and the nations shall learn war no more? Have we not the most glowing imagery of prophecy to express the universal prevalence of social, moral, religious virtues, and the utter extinction of vice and sin, during this blissful period of millennial glory? And if Christ is to reign on the earth with his saints, and all nations be in holy subordination to his sway, how can Satan, under these circumstances, from such materials gather an unparalleled mighty host, and organize it in battle against the saints? Does not this seemingly unmanageable difficulty suggest that the passage must be in some other way interpreted, because it forbids us to understand it according to its literal representation?

We are fully aware of the seeming difficulty, but nevertheless must adhere to the literal meaning,

(1.) Because the passage is an *explanation* of the facts of the future consequential upon the release of Satan, and the success of his delusions. The acts and agency spoken of are such as are proper to his personal influence, having been literally realized in the bitter experience of the world from the beginning.

(2.) There is no figure of speech in it, by which the words of this text can be made to mean any thing but what they grammatically signify.

(3.) Those born during the millennium will be born



in original sin, but sanctified from the womb; and being freed from the delusions of Satan, will be exempted from the power of temptation; but when he is loosed again, and permitted free access to men, he will stir up the spirit of rebellion in the hearts of the last generation of this period, left to itself in the same way that Adam and Eve were left in the primitive paradisaical state; so that it shall appear, there is nothing within the nature of man, however advanced in moral excellence, by which he can maintain his virtue and happiness independently of the protecting agency of God. This will account for the fact of the mighty outbreak which shall be produced by the release of Satan, who symbolizes the host of evil angels under his sway. And should any ask, how it can take place in a world redeemed, and under the sovereign rule of the Son of Man, as its king; let them reflect upon and explain the method by which Satan gained access to our first parents, whose perfection and holy associations, it would seem, ought to have exempted them from the disaster of the fall. If this can or can not be accounted for, the same line of remark appropriated to its investigation, will serve to show that the great fact in question must be reasoned upon in the same way.

Now we are informed, that Satan, when let loose, "shall go out to deceive the nations that are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea." The law of the simile is, that the names of things compared must be taken in their literal not in any analogical meaning; otherwise we could not tell

what things were compared. Therefore, as the sand of the sea must be understood to mean literal sand, so the nations spoken of must mean nations of men conspicuous for their density of population. These are called Gog and Magog by metonymy, to denote the people residing in the remote regions thus anciently named.

These names occurring in Rev. 20, have given no little trouble to expositors, some contending that they mean the literal Gog and Magog of Ezekiel; others that they signify evil spirits. We do not think they mean either, but simply those nations that shall live in remote corners of the earth, originally denominated Gog and Magog, at the close of the millennium.

Magog, Tubal, and Meshech were sons of Japheth, whose descendants peopled the north of Europe and north-western part of Asia. In process of time, these names were appropriated to designate the *descendants* of the persons aforesaid, or the *nations* springing from them, together with the *territory* they occupied; just as Judah and Israel signified the nation and territory of the Hebrews.

In Ezekiel, 37th chapter, we find a vision whose explication is given by the spirit of inspiration, and shows that the Jews shall be restored to their own land.

“They shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children’s children *forever*: and my servant David shall be their prince *forever*. My taberna le shall be with them: yea, I will be their

God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them *for evermore.*"

It is impossible to apply this passage to any thing else but the literal restoration of the Jews, without impeaching the veracity of God, and cutting up by the roots every principle upon which it is competent for man to receive, or for God to give a verbal revelation.

In the two following chapters, we have a particular account of the enemies that will come against Israel, or that portion of them that shall have returned to their own land. These are thus designated according to the true translation of chap. 38 : 2 : "Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of the Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal." The nations called by these names, and their allies named in the context, are grouped under the general terms Gog and Magog, according to the practice of the prophets of making the first national appellation of any people, a perpetual name by which all subsequent peoples inhabiting their territory should be designated. This in fact was one of the necessities of prophecy. For instance, should a prophet now arise and address a prediction to us, relative to the Canadians, which should be fulfilled a thousand years hence; in order that we should understand him, it would be necessary that he should call the inhabitants of the Canadas by the name under which they are now known; and that name would stand for the future inhabitants of that land, no matter what political revolutions might intervene to change it for another by which they should be known

to subsequent generations. Keeping this in view, we shall have no difficulty with the terms GOG and MAGOG.

By the aid of ancient geographers and maps, it is easy to trace the transmutations of names until we come down to the present time. Pliny says that "Hierapolis, taken by the Scythians, was afterward called Magog," and Josephus says that "the Scythians were called by the Greeks Magog." The name Caucasus is said to be derived from two oriental words, Gog and Chasan. Meshech, says Josephus, was the progenitor of the Moscheni, and Tubal of the Theobelites. We need not give here any thing more than the results of an investigation that any one may make for himself. *Gog* and *Magog* mean our modern Russia, and in general the north of Europe and north-west of Asia.

Ezekiel and his cotemporaries knew this region only by these terms ; and thus he proceeds, after enumerating their allies, (verse 8th,) to address the enemies of Israel, as they rose upon his prophetic vision.

"After many days thou shalt be visited: in the *latter years* thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them. Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee." 14th verse: "Thus saith the Lord God; In *that day* when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come *from thy place out of the*

*north parts*, thou, and many people with thee: . . .  
 and thou shalt come up against my people of Israel,  
 as a cloud to cover the land; *it shall be in the latter*  
*days*, and I will bring thee against my land, that the  
 heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in  
 thee, O GOG, before their eyes. Thus saith the Lord  
 God; Thou art he of whom *I have spoken in old time*  
*by my servants the prophets of Israel*, which prophesied  
 in those days many years that I should bring thee  
 against them." 39 : 6, "And I will send a fire on  
 MAGOG," etc.

Among the prophets referred to in this prediction  
 are *Joel*, *Micah*, *Zephaniah*, and *Isaiah*. The third  
 chapter of Joel speaks of the same great battle in  
 graphic language. Micah 4 : 11-13; Zeph. 3 : 8;  
 Isa. 26 : 20, 21 predict it. By comparing this pro-  
 phecy of Ezekiel with that of Zechariah 14, it will  
 be observed that both refer to the same conflict which  
 is to take place in the land of Israel and *before* the mil-  
 lennium; an awful scene, of which Joel says, 2 : 2 :  
 "There hath not been ever the like, neither shall be  
 ever more after it." So Daniel 12 : 2 : "There shall  
 be a time of trouble, such as never was since there  
 was a nation, even to that same time; and at that  
 time *thy people shall be delivered*." (See also Jer. 30 : 7.)  
 Our Saviour in his wonderful prophecy, also thus  
 speaks of the same calamity, Matt. 24 : 21 : "For  
 then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since  
 the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever  
 shall be." He could not therefore have meant the  
 destruction of Jerusalem, which occurred forty years  
*after* his day.



The Gog and Magog of Ezekiel unquestionably describe all the nations gathered against Jerusalem when "the day of the Lord cometh," Zech. 14:1; and the whole of the chapter shows that it must occur *before* the millennium. After that period shall have elapsed, there will be, as already stated, another great battle. The nations that shall be deceived by Satan after his release, are the remote nations, then living in the ancient territories of Gog and Magog; and not only they, but all others in quarters similarly remote, which for that very reason may be equally *symbolized* by these terms. This will appear by translating the article as follows: "and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, *the GOG and the MAGOG*, to gather them together to battle," so called on account of their remoteness of locality, and resemblance in spirit to the veritable Gog and Magog of Ezekiel. But let it be observed, that the nations whom Ezekiel calls Gog and Magog, need not pass under these names at the time when they shall assemble against Jerusalem; for by whatsoever names they may then be known, the necessity of prophecy, as aforesaid, compelled their designation by the national names known in his own day, Gog and Magog, because synonymous names for *remote* nations not known. Thus it was natural that John, in describing the *remote* nations that should come up from all points toward the equator, against the camp of the Saints, *after* the millennium, should call them, "*the Gog and the Magog*," just to save a lengthened description.

These nations incited to rebellion are thus described in their movement to destruction: "And they went up

upon the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." By their going up upon the breadth of the earth, we are to understand their emergence from their own remote localities, and convergence toward the equator. The camp of the saints probably symbolizes the body of those subordinate rulers who execute the "law that goeth forth from Jerusalem," and the beloved city indicates the "new Jerusalem," or company of the glorified "kings and priests" who are Christ's co-regents over the earth. The insane project of these nations being the subversion of the kingdom, when they shall have set themselves in their chosen position for the aggressive movement, their destruction shall be instantaneous by the miraculous agency of God, consuming them in the way, or after some method of the way indicated by "fire from heaven." Thus shall the last great effort of Satan be brought to an end by the miserable fiery ruin of all those deluded nations, that forsook their avowed allegiance to the King of kings.

3. The final doom of Satan and his angels, must then be executed. Thus the further explanation of the vision: "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet had been cast, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." Fire burning with brimstone is the most horrible agency of human suffering that we can conceive of, and a *lake* full of this material is made to symbolize the punishment of hell, of which we can form no idea except by the dreadful rep-

representative. In this intensity of suffering, the smoke of their torment ascendeth forever. This is the end of Satan and his angels, together with all who madly yield to his delusions rather than submit to the Lord of life.

III. The *second Resurrection*. In a former essay, it was shown that the "first resurrection" is to be a *literal* one, embracing all the dead in Christ, for the following reasons: The vision is so *explained* by the Holy Ghost. It is admitted that the vision in the latter part of the chapter means a *literal* resurrection, and therefore the first one mentioned, must be literal also, since both refer to the dead and their restoration from the regions of death and the grave. A figurative interpretation is inadmissible, because there is no *figure* in the language used; but symbols only, which are *explained*, and which explanation must necessarily be literal.

Paul, as it has been shown, makes this plain, in 1 Cor. 15, "For as in Adam *all* die, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive;" in which passage nothing can be more evident than this, the second *all* is coëxtensive with the first. Just as plain is the fact, that the resurrection is not simultaneous, "but each one in his own band." He upon whom all things depend, is first mentioned as having risen; for this fact is the basis of the Christian hope. "Afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." But we have proved that Christ must come *before* the millennium, therefore "the resurrection of the just" must take place at the inauguration of that age.

When this great day shall end, the events symbolized by the following vision shall be the termina-

tion of the judgment. "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Although the word *resurrection* is not here employed to designate the reunion of soul and body in order to the execution of judgment upon the wicked, the *fact* is nevertheless a necessary implication; first, because a similar restoration of a portion of the dead had already been called the *first resurrection*. (Ch. 19 : 5.) "The rest of the dead" there spoken of, as about to live at the end of the thousand years, is therefore a prediction of the second resurrection. Second, because the fact of the restoration of the rest of the dead as here recorded, is the evident fulfillment of that prediction. It is the acknowledged doctrine of the Gospel that there shall be a literal resurrection both of the *just* and of the *unjust*; and since the resurrection of the just is called the *first*, beyond all question, that of the unjust must be the *second*. And if the declaration, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first re-

surrection," etc., indicate the character of the persons spoken of, we can not doubt that the second resurrection embraces all the unholy dead, and none besides. The whole scene presented to the mind of the seer was an overwhelming one.

1st. A great white throne. This symbol of divine sovereignty is called *great*, in contrast with the other thrones previously mentioned; and *white* to denote the infinite rectitude of that sovereignty; but the august appearance of the throne itself is owing to the greatness and glory of Him that sits upon it.

2d. The symbol of the flying away of the heavens and the earth, can not denote the physical motion, or flight of the earth in its orbit, because this flight would express nothing new or extraordinary; for this motion of the earth and its surrounding atmosphere is natural to its obedience to the physical laws of the universe. Nor can this flight denote removal from place to place; because it is said, "there was found no place for them." Their vanishing out of sight, and into nothingness, therefore indicates that the *fearfulness* of the appearance of Godhead incumbent upon the throne purely in the character of an inexorable Judge, is unspeakable; and only to be ideally conveyed by creation itself shrinking into its original nonentity before Him. This is in keeping with the custom of the sacred writers. No language can paint the effect of this appearance. (See chap. 16 : 20, and Psalm 114 : 3.) The so-called flight in these last named references shows, that what was an effect on the small scale, will be an effect of the same kind on the great one.

3d. The position of the dead, small and great, stand-



ing before the throne, is a symbol of the actual, formal judgment passed upon them by the Judge, as culprits arraigned before him. It is only in the scene of the resurrection of the *unjust* that the pomp of law and justice is displayed. The *dead* can therefore mean only the unholy dead, or such as were distinguished from those that *slept* in Jesus, who, having awakened, *lived* and reigned with him, a thousand years before the last band were raised up to stand before the throne in the character of culprits.

4th. Books were opened. Law-books symbolize the human conscience, which records the circumstantial evidence by which every mouth shall be stopped, and the wicked stand self-convicted before the Judge; the Scriptures; and every means of discovery by which the wicked might have known their duty, and shaped their conduct according to the measure of light providentially afforded them in the days of the flesh. The book of life is the record which God keeps of those who strive to obey his will. It is "the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Chap. 13 : 8.) All who are his, being united to him as the branch to the vine, have eternal life from him as its fountain; and the use of this book is apparently in evidence on the great trial, to show that the names of the wicked are not in it. Hence they have not any title from him to eternal life, because they have not had their condemnation removed by the intervention of his blood, making atonement for sin. This judgment therefore is wholly a condemnatory one.

5th. The sea gave up the dead that were therein. This is a symbol used throughout Revelation to mean

the fluctuating populace of the earth ; we can not therefore suppose that it is used here in its literal sense, for righteous men as well as wicked have been engulfed beneath the waves of the sea. It must therefore mean the wicked, turbulent peoples of the earth, amid whose conflicts of every kind untold multitudes have died.

6th. Death is here grammatically associated with *Hades*, and both symbolize the intermediate state of the wicked who are held by them, as souls not only separated from their bodies, but as spiritually dead. This association is peculiar with John, and should not escape our observation. Thus, chap. 1 : 18, "I am he that have the keys of death and of hades." 6 : 8 : "His name that sat on (the pale horse) was Death, and hades followed with him." So in the text, "Death and hades were cast into the lake of fire." This formula would seem to indicate not only the fact of death holding the bodies, and hades the souls of men, but that death and hades are associated as the keepers of the wicked against the day of judgment. Since we do not find these names as personifications, in connection with the first resurrection, they appear to be used by John in their worst sense. The hell of the New Testament is most commonly used for a *place* of torment, while death is largely used to designate a *state* of alienation from God. We therefore think that the terms sea, death, hades, personified as the keepers of the wicked who deliver them up to judgment, mean the receptacles of the bodies and souls of the *lost* alone.

These are judged every one according to his works. Now the works of the wicked are all bad. Evil thoughts prompting to evil words and actions, render

their whole lives so thoroughly sinful, it is a moral necessity that, as they have been the willing dupes of the devil, they must share his doom. Christ informs us that the "everlasting fire was *prepared* for the devil and his angels," not for men; but when men follow the devil and imbibe the spirit of his angels, we have the same authority for saying that they must endure through an awful eternity precisely what the devil and his angels suffer.

7th. Death and hades were cast into the lake of fire. There is a metonymy here of the keepers for the kept; denoting that all who were spiritually dead, and reserved in hades for this judgment, were thrust into the depths of perdition. Death and hades being mere names for the *state* and *place* of the wicked corresponding to each other, can only mean that the wicked held by them for judgment, shall be cast into the lake of fire; and so death and hades themselves shall be necessarily and forever abolished, since there shall never be any more subjects for either. This seems to be the meaning of the *explanation* given in the following words: "This is the second death, and whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

This final state of the lost is the state of the *second* death. The contrast here is not between temporal and eternal death, but between the *first* death of sin and the curse, which unimpeded leads to destruction, and the *second* death of soul and body reunited, in which the wages of sin are fully paid, and the extent of the curse fully realized in everlasting banishment from happiness; where torment is the perpetual condition

of an accursed existence. "And they shall be tormented with fire and brimstone before the holy angels and the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth forever and ever." (Ch. 14 : 10-11.) This dreadful imagery seems to have been borrowed from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. (Gen. 19 : 24.) On the ground of that judicial calamity, this representation of the mode of future punishment is made, for Abraham is said to have looked upon the cities of the plain, after their overthrow, "and lo ! the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace." It is not improbable that Sodom and its neighboring cities were situated upon a plain that became the crater of a volcano, into the fearful fiery sea of which they were submerged ; and that this crater was afterward filled with water by the constant flow of the Jordan. From this early destruction the imagery of hell is borrowed. (See Jude verse 7.) An awful reality, the thought of which is enough to make the heart faint.

Let the impenitent take heed to the impressive warning of Christ, "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do : but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear : Fear him who after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell. Yea, I say unto you, fear him." Let him pray in all the excited energy of an arousing conviction.

O God ! my inmost soul convert,  
And deeply on my thoughtful heart  
Eternal things impress ;  
Give me to feel their solemn weight ;  
And save me ere it be too late—  
Wake me to righteousness !

“ Before me place in bright array  
 The pomp of that tremendous day,  
 When thou with clouds shalt come,  
 To judge the nations at thy bar ;  
 And tell me, Lord, shall I be there,  
 To meet a joyful doom ?”

When God made the world, he pronounced it very good. “ And God made man in his own image, in the image of God created he him ; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion.” (Gen. 1 : 27-28.)

Man was thus created a *perfect* being, in *perfect* happiness, in a *perfect* world. It was a state of holiness and happiness in which he enjoyed all that he could enjoy. But sin entered. Man lost the image of God. He was *cursed*, and expelled from happiness. The earth was *cursed* for his sake, and fell under the usurpation of the devil.

All this dreadful disaster was, *more humano*, an accident producing vast derangement in the works of God. The great Architect, however, was pleased to ordain means for the recovery of man and his habitation, which should bring back the human race from its lost condition, and restore the world to its pristine beauty and physical perfection. A second Adam, practically operating a wonderful scheme of redemption, should destroy the works of the devil, and reclaim mankind and the world from ruin. This has been going on through various dispensations, succeeding each other for thousands of years. The millennial dispensation shall be the last, at the close of which Satan and his



hosts of angels and men shall be shut up forever in punishment; the world recovered from all physical evil, shall be *regenerated*; the human race, by means of the second Adam, shall regain the image of God, with the dominion originally attached. The heavenly *state* shall again invest the earthly *place* of man's habitation. The world shall again be pronounced *very good*. All creation shall shine in her pristine glory. Man regenerate shall realize the second publication of the original command, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion." Generation upon generation of a holy and happy race shall multiply forever and ever; all saved, all rescued. This will be the unspeakably glorious *result* of the atonement, whose blessed Author in the midst of them shall see the "travail of his soul and be SATISFIED;" and the world of God's workmanship repaired, and set a-going as at first, shall roll on forever and ever, amid joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

W. R. G.

## ESSAY XVII.

### THE DIFFICULTIES OF POSTMILLENARIANISM.

IN a previous essay, the False Method of Interpretation, which has prevailed in the Protestant Church since the days of Dr. Whitby, was shown to be the source of great mischief to the Word of God. It is also the source of many difficulties through which its advocates seem unable to make a clear path.

I. This theory of a *spiritual* sense, by its proffered explanations, makes a large portion of the Scriptures incomprehensible, if not absurd. Take for example Is. 60 : 1-11. Here is an animating promise of restoration, salvation, prosperity, and distinction made to the Jewish people, whose privilege will be that of imparting light and truth to the Gentile world. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." "The forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee." "Thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles."

The figures of speech in this prophecy only serve to give sharpness to the picture of a literal regathering

of Israel, and we think nothing else can be made out of it without violence to the simplest rules of interpretation. But postmillenarians deny this, and say the great theme of the prophecy is not the *Jewish* people, but the *Gentile* Church. The quickest way to decide this, is by substituting the explanatory term which they insist upon as conveying the true meaning, thus: "Arise, shine; for *thy* light (*O Gentile Church*;) is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon the Gentile Church." "The *Gentiles* shall come to the light of the *Gentile* Church, and Gentile kings to the brightness of the rising of the *Gentile* Church." "The forces of the *Gentiles* shall come into the *Gentile* Church." "The gates of the *Gentile* Church shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto the *Gentile Church* the forces of the *Gentiles*!!" Very fine exposition!

We say that the distinction here is between the Jewish nation, and the Gentile world, who are to be enlightened by means of the Jews when restored. On the other hand, our brethren say that the distinction is between the Christian Church, and the nations of the earth. But the Christian Church, excluding the Jews, is *confined* to the Gentiles, and therefore, according to the theory aforesaid, their interpretation can not get rid of the absurdity just stated.

Again: the angel's prophetic announcement in Luke 1 : 32, 33 is made in the simplest language, and without a figure of any kind: "The Lord shall give unto him (Christ) *the throne of his father David*." This is very easily understood, and must mean exactly what it says; nothing more, nothing less. But we

are told that this *throne* means *the hearts of God's people*. Indeed! but there is neither *figure* nor *symbol* in the passage; where is the authority, then, for putting *both* into it? Why, that of *judicious* commentators, be sure! But does not this explanatory clause, "He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever," determine the meaning of the throne to be the same kind of sovereignty over the same people that David swayed? "Not at all," say our brethren; "the house of Jacob means the Christian Church"!! "Admirable exegesis!" every heretic may exclaim. According to it, the Unitarian is enabled to say that the *former* part of Gabriel's speech to Mary must be *spiritualized* in the same way. It simply contains a glowing figure of speech, denoting that Jesus should be "sanctified from the womb," and therefore he must be regarded as the son of Joseph, nothing more. The liberties taken in both cases are the same, only the argument of the Unitarians is much the stronger, on the score of a like *incongruity* alleged by postmillenarians against Christ's occupancy of the throne of David. It thus turns out that if our brethren are right, Unitarians are right. *They can not escape the consequence.*

II. Postmillenarians can not produce a single passage of Scripture in defense of their spiritualizing system—NOT ONE. This is a great difficulty. We all believe in a literal earthly millennium, and in the literal return of Christ to the earth at some time; and when any one asserts that this millennium is only the spread of Gospel principle under the spiritual reign of Christ—that he will not come quickly, but that at least a thousand years must elapse before his personal

coming—the proof rests upon him; and if it be not forthcoming, we have a right to assume that it is an unsupported opinion. Here our differences begin. Our brethren deny our doctrine, maintaining that Christ will not personally come till after the millennium, and that this era will simply be one of a remarkable diffusion of the Gospel, caused by his *spiritual* coming. We require proof for this, but they are not able to give a single passage of Scripture where text or context will justify their views—NOT ONE.

III. We believe that Christ will come to reign on the earth, and over the earth, as a literal king previous to and during the millennium; and we have given proof of this, *direct, indirect*, and, according to the revealed arrangements of the future, *circumstantial*; and no attempt has been made to invalidate our proof. We believe none can succeed. But our brethren deny, asserting that the kingship of Christ will be altogether spiritual, while they admit that he was, in his flesh, a *prophet* and a *priest* literally. We think the proof is clear, that he must be king literally as well, according to Acts 2:30; David “being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, *according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ, TO SIT ON HIS THRONE.*” Barnes’s comment on this, is weakness greatly reduced. Our brethren deny our position, asserting that he will not reign literally at all, during this or any other period, on the earth. We call for an effort to rebut our Scriptural argument, but our brethren can not give a single passage of Scripture to prove their point—NOT ONE.



They have been profoundly silent. We can account for this on no other ground than their experience of great difficulty to construct an argument that can stand "an investigation." It will not do to account for it by reason of *contempt* for the subject, for this we will not believe them to feel, unless they avow it; nor have they attempted to shake the proof of our position. We maintain that the *spiritual* reign of the *Man* Christ Jesus, is a proposition in itself altogether unintelligible, and from the Scriptures altogether indefensible; and therefore no amount of special pleading can make it comport with the nature of things. They have not brought a single passage to prove such a reign—NOT ONE.

IV. We assert that the Scriptures represent Christ as about to "set up" a MATERIAL KINGDOM upon the earth, as well as that he will "sit upon the throne of his father David;" a kingdom in which creation shall be regenerated *physically*, and the human race *spiritually*. We have given overwhelming proof on this point from Scripture, which our brethren have not attempted to set aside. They, however, deny; alleging that this kingdom will be *spiritual*, and not material; but they do not, and can not furnish one single text or passage from Scripture to prove their point—NOT ONE.

The word *kingdom* in Scripture must mean the same thing that it means in any other book, if inspiration has not given us some peculiar meaning; but no peculiar meaning is given. On the other hand, pains are taken to show that it will be SET UP upon the earth, *in the room* of all other kingdoms, and over the

territory and people of all other kingdoms after their outward forms have been destroyed. Therefore we say, and beg pardon for plainness of speech, and entreat that it may not be taken as discourteous—we say that the phrase *spiritual kingdom* expressed, or the idea implied, can not be found in Scripture. It is altogether a mistake. In *every* sense it is anti-Scriptural, and unintelligible. There is not a passage in the Bible where the term spiritual, is used to qualify the word kingdom—NOT ONE.

V. We have shown that our *hope* is "*the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto him*" in his kingdom as aforesaid, and not the indefinite thing which Christians are taught to look for as a pure abstraction. We have proved that this form of words and others embodying the same idea, are constantly set forth in the Scripture as *expressive* of our hope, and our position has not been overthrown. Our brethren deny, but they have not been able to disprove it by any passage of Scripture—NOT ONE.

VI. We have shown that every "*coming of the Son of Man*" must necessarily be, by the usage of the original, *literal*, and never *figurative*, never *spiritual*. We have furnished clear proof of this. Our brethren deny; but they have not quoted a single passage of Scripture to prove that the *παρουσία* of Christ can or will be *spiritual*—NOT ONE.

VII. We have proved that there will not be a general simultaneous resurrection at the end of the world, as commonly held, but that the millennium will intervene between *two* resurrections; the *first* being the "resurrection of the just," and the *second*

“the resurrection of the unjust.” We have given various proofs on this point from the Scriptures, not one of which has been shown irrelevant. On the other hand, our brethren deny, and strive to invalidate our proof in one passage only, (Rev. 20,) in which they signally fail, leaving the rest untouched; but they bring forward no Scripture passage proving our view false and theirs true—NOT ONE.

VIII. We have shown that the practical tendency of our views is to the increase of love to Christ as a Saviour *near at hand*, and to the cultivation of heavenly-mindedness, with other graces essential to our spiritual growth. We have shown in part the advantage derivable from them to an evangelical teacher in explaining the Word of God. On these points we have furnished much scriptural evidence, and our brethren can offer no passages to disprove our points—NOT ONE.

IX. We have shown that their method of interpretation is utterly inconsistent with the most approved and obviously right rules for ascertaining the meaning of language, and our brethren are unable to show any fallacy in our argument, or disprove the truth of the accusation we bring against this variable and unreliable method. They have had a whole year in which to do it—for we brought these rules early to notice in this discussion—but they have maintained profound silence. Was it not more from necessity than inclination?

X. We have proved that our views entered into the orthodox faith of the Christian church from the beginning, and thence prevailed for *three hundred years*;

and our brethren have not ventured to dispute our authorities. These are all *postmillenarian* writers, whose honesty was too strong for their prejudice. On this point our proof is overwhelming.

XI. The way our brethren have chosen to manage their side of the argument, we claim as evidence of a virtual surrender. They have studiously avoided discussing any one of our main positions, contenting themselves with caviling at an interpretation here and there, and raising an objection now and then ; but this was an unfortunate method. Some, we regret to say, by personal and unprovoked abuse ; others, by an occasional shot, without pretending to stand up to the discussion, have disposed of their side as best they could. We claim nothing unfair, we think, when we claim that the manner and method of our good brethren demonstrate that postmillenarianism is *incapable of defense*.

XII. Their objections thought to be most damaging to our views, in many instances recoil upon their own, and give prominence to the difficulties they encounter in their defense. For instance, one writer, too eager to overthrow the millenarian doctrine respecting the speedy coming of Christ, says: "From the very first period of the church's history, this dogma has been associated with the most deplorable fanaticism." Others add, "It results in infidelity." It is remarkable that the putters-forth of this objection do not see in what a position they are placed by it. They profess to believe that Jesus Christ will literally come at some time as well as we, and when he comes it will be speedily to the generation then living. The doctrine

will *then* be productive of fanaticism, and also of infidelity, because, according to their showing, these evils are *inseparable* from a belief in Christ's speedy advent! The objection therefore lies not only against his speedy coming, but against his coming at all; for if such be the necessary consequences of the doctrine, certainly it ought never to be preached, and ought never to have been revealed. The objection thus impeaches the wisdom of Christ in making known to man the fact of his coming again in the clouds, and thence drawing an argument for our constant WATCHING.

If "from the very first period of the church's history, this dogma was associated with the most deplorable fanaticism," and if, according to postmillenarian writers—who tell us that the first three centuries constituted the *purest* age of the church—*Chiliasm* for all that time was the orthodox faith, then beyond question the purest age of the church was the age of the most deplorable fanaticism! And for this great defection who were responsible but the apostles themselves? Paul said *the grace of God taught all men* TO LOOK FOR THE GLORIOUS APPEARING of Christ. He therefore converted men not only to Christianity but to fanaticism, according to our brethren; for he says expressly that they *turned to God from idols*, TO WAIT FOR HIS SON FROM HEAVEN! Was not this an unfounded expectation, and has not the lapse of time proved this *waiting* to have been just as fanatical as it can now be? And was not John just as far astray as Paul, when to the assurance of the Redeemer, "Surely I come quickly," he appended the prayer, "Even so,



come, Lord Jesus"? More than eighteen centuries have passed away, and he has not come yet! Who does not see that "it results in infidelity"? We do not wish to utter an unbecoming word, but we think that many of the objections of our brethren, deemed most formidable, only serve to force their own system between the millstones of *Reductio ad absurdum*. It is a system, as we believe, of human invention, anti-scriptural in its nature, and inimical in its continuance to the best interests of the church.

It was for many years, as great a deception to us, as it is still to others; and our desire is to persuade men to read, to think independently, to cast aside the bonds of educational prejudice, to avoid *prudence falsely so called*; or in other words, to have the courage to investigate for themselves, without the fear of man before their eyes, and follow where truth leads, without instituting any question like this, "Have any of the Pharisees believed on him?" guided by the preponderance of argument, without sacrificing it to some objection, whose existence may be simply the result of remaining in the swaddling bands of human opinion imposed upon us, as the truth of God. We hope we may neither be misrepresented nor misunderstood. We seek no interest but that of Christ's cause. We despise the feeling of wishing to be thought victorious in the conduct of our argument. We have a higher aim, and avow a nobler purpose—that of breaking down as far as we can a false system of interpreting the word of God, which is prejudicial to the best interest, and to the common hope of the church.

W. R. G.

## ESSAY XVIII.

### THE PRACTICAL USES OF OUR DISCUSSION.

“WHAT is the use, says one, of agitating the church with a subject of no practical importance? If I am safe, it makes no matter to me *how* Christ comes, whether *spiritually* or *personally*; whether *before* or *after* the millennium. This subject is not necessary to salvation.”

Not so fast, my good brother. *Are you safe* with such a governing sentiment? If selfishness be, as some say, the very soul and vitality of sin, and if “the things of Christ” interest you only so far as they may be “necessary to salvation,” how are you to show that your religion is not based upon pure selfishness? Christ the Almighty Architect has revealed a *plan* and *specifications* for the erection of an eternal monument of glory upon this earth, and all his servants he employs to work for him; but they can only work for him according to the plan, and for the object he has in view. Now if any of them consent to be interested in his affairs only so far, and to the end that they may themselves be saved, is not that fact, *per se*, enough to prove them smitten with a dangerous delusion? Is that the measure of love which he requires, and with

which we ought to requite him for the death of the cross! Shame upon such a sentiment and such a feeling as would give me ease in neglecting his interests as "King of kings and Lord of lords," because they may be thought "not necessary to salvation." His GLORY is the end of our existence, and must be the magnet to our love; if it is not, it makes little difference how much or how little we may be interested in what is only "necessary to salvation."

Such, however, is the reply of many who admit for a moment that we are right, just to put in a question presumed incapable of being so answered as to show that the importance of the subject will justify debate. This indicates the feeling by which good but mistaken men plead for indifference to it; but we intend to show it is of the *greatest practical* use, by the testimony of the Scriptures. We think we can prove it useful in gaining correct scriptural views of the scheme of Christian doctrine; in getting and maintaining frames of mind and heart which will tend to secure non-conformity to the world; and in the formation of a purpose and practice which shall realize to a great degree the fulfillment of that precious promise, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is staid on thee." Far be it from us to question the piety, or derogate from any of the good qualities of Christians who reject our views; but we intend to show that their estimate of the practical importance of millenarianism is false, by the testimony of Scripture; and mischievous, by the evidence of the present state of the church; and therefore unjust to those whom they scoff at as *Chiliasts*, and deride as fanatical, without

answering their arguments. Nor shall we depend upon any thing but the Scriptures. If our assertions are not fully warranted by the Word of God, let them go into the depths of forgetfulness; but if they are, then surely we are not arrogant if we claim for them the interest and earnest attention of the reader.

When we were struggling with the effort to make the rules of interpretation taught in our seminary compatible with spiritualizing the Scriptures, and were subsequently engaged in preaching that the promises made to the *Jewish* people were really meant for the *Gentile* church, nothing embarrassed us more than the *reason* which Paul advances for commending his brethren. For instance, he thanks God that the Corinthians "came behind in no gift, *waiting for the coming (apocalypse)* of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 1 : 7.) Does this apocalypse, this revealing or uncovering, imply by necessity, Christ's bodily presence or not? If it does, he commends them for that very *Chiliasm* for which our brethren deride us; if it does not, then what does Paul mean? If he mean that himself and they were actually waiting for the personal return of Christ, which, so far as they knew, might occur any day, then beyond the hope of successful gainsaying, they were *Chiliasts*; nothing else. If he does not mean this, then what were they *waiting* for? Paul believed this waiting to be in accordance with Christian duty, and moreover the proof of grace! Will our brethren help us here?

Again, of the Thessalonians he says, "that they turned from idols, to serve the living and true God, *and to wait for his Son from heaven.*" (1 Thess. 1 : 9, 10.)

Was this waiting referable to his *personal* or his *figurative* coming? If to the first, we have no difficulty; if to the second, we can not understand it, and again ask for help.

Including himself with the Philippians, he says: "For *our* conversation is in heaven, *from whence also we look for the Saviour*, the Lord Jesus Christ." This surely is descriptive of Christ's bodily presence; but then such an interpretation makes the apostles and the aforesaid Christians all *Chiliasts*. Can our brethren explain?

Furthermore, so wrapped up was the soul of the apostle in this doctrine, that he seems to *limit* the reward of the righteousness to persons of his way of thinking. "A crown which the Lord shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto *all them that love his appearing*." (2 Tim. 4: 8.) Nor is this the only place where he makes seemingly the same limitation; for he declares in Heb. 9: 28, that "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and *unto them that look for him* shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Thus it would appear, not only that *Chiliasm*, as our brethren term our belief, is in accordance with the Word of God, but that it is really dangerous to be resting upon a faith which is not waiting daily for the coming of Christ; which is not kept alive and active by looking for the Saviour to come from heaven; which does not work by the love of his appearing; and which not only does not look for him, but declares that he is not to be looked for at least until a thousand years hence! In our judgment the Romans, the Corinthians, the Thessa-



lonians and the Philippians were *Chiliasts*, by the showing of Paul who approved of their views; and as nothing is said to the contrary, it is fair to infer that the Ephesians, the Galatians, the Colossians, were of the same type of faith; for they were all under the instructions of Paul, Timothy and other faithful co-adjutors who saw eye to eye in this matter. We suggest, therefore, not so much for our convenience as their own profit, that we be spared a derision which may possibly fall where our brethren least expect. We care for it not a rush, but we do care for them, and for the decencies of a reputable discussion.

*1st Use.* Christian obedience. 1 John 2: 28: "And now, little children, abide in him, that *when he shall appear*, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him *at his coming*." Who can avoid seeing that the coming of Christ is here made the great motive for steadfastness in the faith, and confidence in an expectation now everywhere derided? We are to stand before him at his coming; and when he appears, as sooner or later he will appear, we shall not be ashamed if the doctrine of his coming have kept us on the watch; but if otherwise, we shall be filled with alarm and confusion when summoned to meet him. To prevent this, let his coming be a spur to your faithfulness. Is not this a practical point?

*2d Use.* Personal holiness. 1 John 3: 2, 3: "We know that *when he shall appear*, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." What hope? Surely, the hope of seeing him as he is; for unless we are like him, we shall not see

him as a friend when he appears; and therefore the hope of the Christian as associated with the appearing of his Saviour is the great means of self-purification, according to John. Is not this then an important practical point?

*3d Use.* A motive for good works. Matt. 16 : 27 : "For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his works." This reward is not a reward of merit, but a reward of approbations; in the fulfillment of promise, and as one star differs from another star in glory, so these rewards will make as great a difference among the heirs of immortal bliss. And that they are associated with the speedy coming of Christ, in Scripture, is apparent from Rev. 22 : 12 : "Behold, *I come quickly*; and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be." Is not this a practical point?

*4th Use.* Christian patience. James 5 : 7, 8 : "*Be patient* therefore, brethren, *unto the coming of the Lord*. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also *patient*; stablish your hearts: for the *coming of the Lord draweth nigh*." "For ye have need of *patience*, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and *he that shall come will come*, and will not tarry." (Heb. 10 : 36, 37.) No one can help seeing that the doctrine of the speedy coming of Christ is here made the great motive for the exercise of patience amid the trials of this life. Is not this a practical point?

*5th Use.* Sobriety of mind. 1 Peter 1 : 13 : "Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you *at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*" Here we are taught to look forward constantly to this ever-to-be-desired occurrence, when the perfection of our happiness shall be reached ; and this stupendous event should be all-controlling in keeping our minds sober, and unapproachable by the seductive charms of a false and flattering world. Is not this a practical point ?

*6th Use.* Temperance. Phil. 4 : 5 : "Let your moderation be known unto all men. *The Lord is at hand.*" But, say some of our brethren, time has proved that he was not at hand ; for eighteen centuries have gone by, and he has not come yet. How, then, could this be a motive to temperance ? We reply, they are as much interested to justify Paul as we can be. But, say others, he came at the destruction of Jerusalem. This certainly would be a queer motive by which to urge temperance upon Gentiles. Our point is, that inspiration urged the coming of the Lord, as a motive to temperance in all things. Who can deny it ? Is not this a practical point ?

*7th Use.* Heavenly-mindedness. Phil. 3 : 20, 21 : "For our conversation is in heaven ; *from whence also we look for the Saviour.*" Our citizenship is not in this world, but in the world to come ; therefore, we must seek deliverance from "this present evil world," by fixing our attention upon and regulating our affections in accordance with the Christian hope to be realized in the coming of Christ, who "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious

body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Surely, this is a practical point.

8th Use. Watchfulness. Luke 12 : 35-37 : "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord, *when he cometh*, shall find watching." Our Saviour generally couples watching with prayer, but here he associates it with *his coming*, and pronounces those blessed whom the motive of his coming keeps watching. Is it not then a practical doctrine for which we are contending? We spread out the evidence. Judge ye.

9th Use. Mortification of sin. Col. 3 : 4, 5 : "When Christ, who is our life, *shall appear*, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify *therefore*, your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection," etc. Here we must observe the fact laid down of the coming of Christ in person, and the illative particle which draws the argument for personal purity from this fact. Nothing can be more evident than that, if we would appear with Christ in glory hereafter, we must first abandon sin here. Surely, this a practical point.

10th Use. Godly living. Tit. 2 : 11-13 : "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and godly, in this present evil world; looking for that blessed hope,

and *the glorious appearing* of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Here, again, as a *motive* to all that is noble in sentiment and daily conduct, we are referred to the doctrine of Christ's personal appearance, for which we are to keep looking. Paul appears to have been an obstinate *Chiliast*. Wherever he can, he brings forward the coming or personal appearance of the Redeemer as the MOTIVE for Christian duty. Surely, it must be a practical doctrine.

11th Use. Brotherly love. 1 Thess. 3 : 12-13: "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love toward one another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end that he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, *at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.*" This is clearly a practical point.

12th Use. Exhortation to sinners. Acts 3 : 19-21: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the *presence* of the Lord; and *he shall send Jesus Christ*, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive UNTIL the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Sinners are to be reminded of the speedy coming of the Lord, of the terrors that shall fall upon the impenitent at that day, and of the everlasting horror that must follow expulsion from him. Repentance and conversion are to be urged upon their attention, that when the great day of his appearing shall be realized, it may be found that their sins are blotted out, and their crowns of conquest ready. Is not this a practical point?



We hear much nowadays about practical religion, but we should like to hear the inculcations of Scripture more frequently on this matter, that we may know what practical religion is. It can not exist apart from the implantation of *doctrinal* truth in the head and heart of the believer. Christian obedience, personal holiness, good works, patience, sobriety of mind, temperance, heavenly-mindedness, watchfulness, mortification of sin, godly living, brotherly love, are the practical points, as above shown, which the Scriptures urge by the MOTIVE of *the coming of Christ*. Will our brethren show that practical religion, as they understand it, according to the theory of spiritualizing the Christian's text-book, is different from and superior to that which we maintain is urged by the scriptural motive of the coming of Christ? We hold that religious faith to be the most intensely practical, which keeps the eye of the soul constantly open upon the "coming of the Lord;" and that this is the most acceptable to him, is clear from his own instructions, Matt. 24 : 42-51.

It is observable here that we can not name the subject of *death* as a motive for a holy life given in the Scriptures. *Life*, not death, is used to fire our ambition to gain a crown; but Christ is life, and hence the coming of Christ is the all comprehensive motive which the apostles thought it needful to urge. This is now sufficiently plain. We have not drawn upon our imagination, nor appealed to our experience, but have kept close up to the Book, clearly showing how variously apt and remarkably forcible the sacred writers make the use of our doctrine as the great stimulus to

holy living. There is no denying this; and after we have furnished our abundant proof, we put in Job's plea for the kind consideration of our sneering brethren. (Job 21 : 3.)

“Bear with me, and I will speak;  
And after I have spoken, mock on!”

No one who peruses the Scriptures can fail to notice a vast difference between the inspired arguments, drawn from the “coming of the Lord,” to influence the mind and heart of all Christians, and those now generally employed for the same purpose. We shall not stop here to contrast them, since no one will gainsay the fairness of our quotations, nor question the fact that inspiration would not make such diversified use of the doctrine in question, were it not the best adapted to promote the sanctity aforesaid. When men, led by the Spirit, “set their affections on things above where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God,” what consideration is so efficient to *keep* them there, as that in the words of our Redeemer, “Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh”? When rightly understood, no one can avoid seeing how well adapted this text is to keep the heart alive with emotion expended upon the person and work of Christ, and upon the wondrous relation we are yet to sustain to him, when we shall see “the COMING ONE, in his kingdom.” We say, *when rightly understood*; for postmillenarianism has so grossly perverted this text, as to make the very source of life, the *personification* of death!

But there are other uses of the millenarian doctrine which we present as constituting a high claim to the honest and fair scrutiny of the ministry of reconciliation.

1st. It best enables us to expound the whole Word of God. Our old study-Bible reveals by marks of usage along its edges, what portions of Scripture received attention, and what were neglected; the leaves of the Old Testament comprising the Psalms, are worn; the rest are clean; and those of the New Testament are all worn, except Revelation. Thus, when shut up, many a study-Bible will show to any one glancing along its edges, whether the owner is a student of prophecy or not; whether he regards it as "a light shining in a dark place," or as a *dark lantern* whose light is shut in from his eyes. We are sure of our ground here. EXPOUNDING is the great duty of the pulpit. That does not mean *pounding out* a guinea into the area of an acre by interminable exhortation upon the most obvious duties of religion, but an explication of the phraseology, so as to give the exact ideas of the Holy Ghost. In other words, it is just such a labor as once made the hearts of two disciples "burn within them," when their understandings were opened to comprehend the true meaning of the Word of God. They who have made exposition a prominent feature in their pulpit performances, will have no hesitation to allow that they have at times been sadly at a loss to give any consistent, intelligent, and satisfactory account of the meaning of the sacred text. For instance: What does Zechariah mean when he says, chapter 14:4: "His feet shall stand in that day upon the

mount of Olives," etc.? Postmillenarianism goes around it by the way of *pious remarks*, and so passes on. What does Paul mean by the following expression of deep solicitude, when, according to that view, it is hard to see why any solicitude should be felt at all; "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss . . . . *if by any means* I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead"? Premillenarianism can alone help us here. When the infidel charges Christ with pilfering some "Lucian's Dialogues of the Dead," in the narrative of Dives and Lazarus, for the sake of proving a doctrine of the Christian Scriptures, what has postmillenarianism to answer? How, upon that system, can Luke 20 : 35-36, be explained in consistency with "the analogy of faith"? What can postmillenarianism make of "*καὶ τῆς ἀνάστασεως τῆς ἐκ νεκρῶν*"? How is it to resist the claim of the annihilationist—that the doctrine of Christ is inconsistent with the belief that the wicked shall ever rise from the dead? If the resurrection is to be simultaneously general, then, beyond dispute, this text necessarily implies that the wicked shall not rise, contrary to other parts of Scripture. So of a large portion of the Word of God. We have only to point to such places, to show how miserably its "*perhapses*," and its "*probables*" (see popular commentators) contrast with the exegesis of Premillenarianism, which at least has the merit of answering the demands of common sense, and of giving a reason which can stand upon its own merits, making text agree with context in all its explanations.

2d. Our view of the teachings of Scripture we think

can be shown serviceable in protecting one from *being blown about with every wind of doctrine*. The beautiful symmetry, the logical coherency, the significant scope of the doctrinal scheme of salvation by grace it exhibits, proves so satisfactory to the judgment of its accepters, that it anchors them, by the strongest cable, to that magnificent scheme. For instance: A post-millenarian may be driven from the doctrine of a *personal* election by dint of argument, to the doctrine of a *national* election as held by Arminians; but no such thing can happen to a premillenarian with his view of divine truth, because he does not hold it as a *mere opinion* of no practical weight, but as *necessary* to the scheme of grace, and as the sure sense of the TRUTH of God deeply seated in his convictions, glorious in itself, and commanding in its practical influence. See Acts 15 : 14, 16, 17.

3d. Premillenarianism, we think, makes us *wiser* in the Scriptures as a whole, affording enlarged views of the purposes of God in his works of creation and providence; giving greater cohesiveness to the doctrines of grace in their logical connections; magnifying the doctrine of particular atonement by extending its application and its power immeasurably beyond the ordinary view of it; shedding light upon the offices of Christ; impressing us with strong views upon the subjects of "sin, righteousness, and a judgment to come;" bringing us to view the cross so as to become penetrated with the conviction that we must be *crucified* to the world, before we can reign with Christ. Hence self-examination, prompted by sincerity, followed by prayer and WATCHING, according to the



special injunction of Christ, will naturally become a frequent exercise; for the reflection, "What if the sign of the Son of Man should meet my eye to-day!" must bring us daily face to face with a great fact whose certainty of occurrence with *uncertainty* of time no Christian will question.

It will not be doubted that the New Testament describes our Lord as having personally come to this earth; as having personally left it; as surely to come again personally as he went away; that no time is anywhere specified which must elapse before his second coming; but on the contrary, it will be sudden, and in some sense, is near. It can not be denied that the Scriptures close, *leaving our Lord upon the earth*. "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them." (Rev. 21 : 3.) Now this truth operates in opposite directions. Those who are watching, this uncertainty keeps watching; hence that day shall not come upon them unawares; and the uncertainty itself has therefore such an influence as to make it the savor of life unto life. Those who are not watching, but believe that for a period of a thousand years at least, it may be said by careless servants, "My Lord delayeth his coming," this uncertainty may become to them a savor of death unto death.

4th. Failure to meet our biblical and historical arguments proves postmillenarianism to be incapable of defense. Take any disputed topic to be decided upon solid argument drawn from the Scriptures alone, upon which opposite views must be sustained in the millenarian debate, and our experience and reading convince

us that the adversaries of Chiliasm (as they contemptuously call it) can not stand for an hour. This does not arise from any lack of ability in them, but is wholly owing to the defects of their system, if system it may be called. Alas! that it ever prevailed; for the Scriptures of truth have fared at its hand much like "a certain man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho." We believe that the intellectual capabilities, sincerity, moral worth, and excellency of spirit of our gainsaying brethren are adequate to every demand that can fairly be made upon them; and therefore we think they do themselves and the cause of revealed truth great injustice by clinging to a method of interpretation which no man on earth can justify as at all adapted to deal fairly with the Bible; because no man ever did, could, would, or should attempt the explanation of any other book by the same means.

"After discussing this subject," says McNeile, "with an Evangelical clergyman, who denied and opposed my (millenarian) views, I ceased to occupy the defensive position, and asked him his view of several of those passages of Scripture which are the turning-points of the whole debate. The substance of his reply, on each of these occasions, was: *The passage is very important; very important, indeed; but I have not made up my mind as to the meaning!*"

The same *substantial* answer has been returned to the writer, in many instances, by *teachers* of the church, who justify their inattention in these things by pressing their own *spirituality* in opposition to *carnality of views!* The precise meaning of this reason we should not dare to guess; but it is highly amusing when asso-

ciated with avowed ignorance of the meaning of the passages in debate. Confessedly, they know not what they mean; only this, *they do not mean millenarianism!*

5th. Our doctrines yield us unspeakable comfort. The "hope set before us" is this: "To him that overcometh I will give," etc. This formula is often repeated by our Saviour in his addresses to the seven churches of Asia, and the various REWARDS specified succeed each other until they culminate in this (will postmillenarians give us the meaning?): "To sit with me in my THRONE, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father upon HIS THRONE." (Rev. 3 : 21.)

The term *reward*, so often used in Scripture, embarrasses those who deny that salvation is of works. They may and do say that God does not give us a reward of debt, because he can never be our debtor, but he gives us a reward of approbation. This is very well, were it not that we actually receive *very much more* than approbation; and this very much more, is the substance of the reward itself. One way of solving the matter is this. PROMISES MAKE DEBTS. No creature, should he be spotless as the unfallen snow, can bring his Maker under obligation; but God can and does bring himself under obligation, by giving us PROMISES; and when he sees fit to append these promises to human duty, because of the association, they become to us REWARDS OF DEBT, because promises make debts; but especially are they REWARDS OF GRACE, because these promises spring from grace. God owes us nothing; but when he voluntarily makes us, in covenant, "exceeding great and precious promises," he then owes us something—

namely, the fulfillment of his promises, and the full measure of covenant blessings. The REWARD, therefore, which we look for, is not the produce of good works, but the fulfillment of gracious promises; and they are as sure to us as every mouthful of his mercy which we daily consume. Divine sovereignty can not interfere with the covenant ordered in all things and sure.

Having thus finished our discussion, we leave it with the candid who are manly enough to immolate prejudice to proof, commending them to the grace of God in Christ Jesus. Now "unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, even his Father, to him be glory and dominion forever. Amen."

W. R. G.

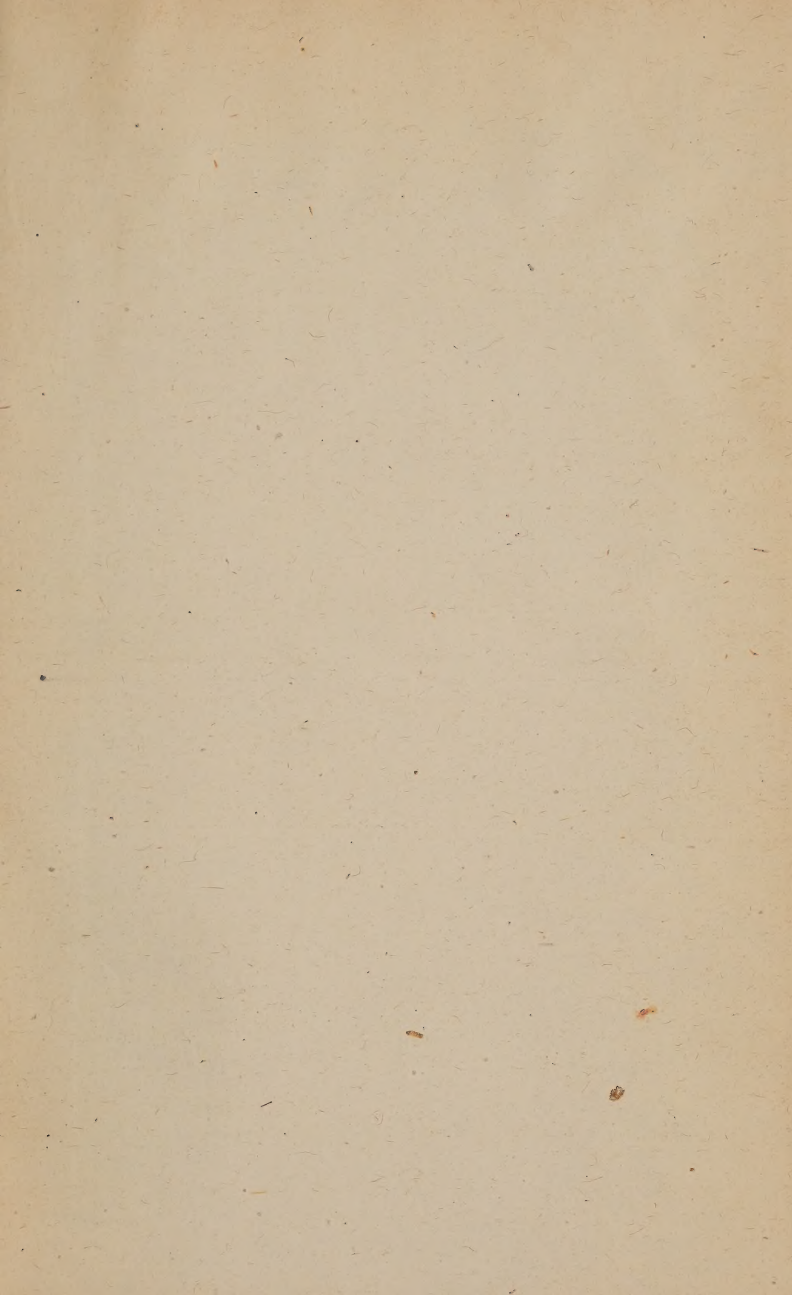
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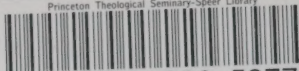








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